

UFCW Canada Local 1006A
General Membership Meeting – November 19, 2019
Telephone Town Hall Event Transcript

Glacier Effs-Samuel: Hi everyone. My name is Glacier Effs-Samuel, recorder of your union. I want to welcome everyone to our fourth and final Telephone Town Hall General Membership Meeting for 2019. We've got thousands of members across the province, so we'll take a bit of time to connect with everyone. For those of you on the line, thank you for your patience. We have an exciting program planned for you tonight again, so stick around. Stay with us for the entire call and you'll have a chance to win a pair of Maple Leaf tickets or a tablet. We'll have more details coming up later in the call.

Glacier Effs-Samuel: Let me start with a brief overview of our guests tonight. As December 6 is the 30th anniversary of the Montreal Massacre, tonight we have Debora De Angelis, Ontario Regional Director for UFCW Canada, who chairs the UFCW Women and Gender Equity Committee, to discuss how we can help eliminate violence against women and the resources available to help women who are suffering. We also have Martha Villeda, Senior WSIB and Health and Safety Representative for 1006A, to talk to us today about what to do if you or someone you know gets injured at work and struggles that injured worker face with Ontario's compensation system. You will also hear from our Local Union President, Wayne Hanley, with the latest union updates.

Glacier Effs-Samuel: Telephone operators are standing by to take down your questions and pass them on to us. To ask a question, press star three on your phone pad. Make sure to give your full question, the name, where you work, to the operator and they'll pass it onto us. Once again, press star three to ask a question. As we only have limited time tonight, questions about individual workplaces will be forwarded to your union representative who will contact you no later than tomorrow night. If the matter is urgent, your union reps contact information is on our website at www.ufcw1006a.ca. Click on the 'Find Your Rep button' and you can email them directly. If you don't get all the questions in tonight, we'll pass those questions onto your rep who will contact you with an answer. As we have done in our past three telephone Town Hall General Membership meetings in February, May, and September, we will be posting an audio file, meeting transcript, and meeting minutes on our website tomorrow. During each telephone Town Hall General Membership Meeting, members will vote to adopt the minutes of the subsequent meeting.

Glacier Effs-Samuel: Let's begin with our first poll. Before we move on, we'll be taking a vote of the adoption of the minutes for the Telephone Town Hall General Membership meeting, as posted on our local union website, held on September 24, 2019. Use your telephone keypad to participate in the vote. The question before us is, "Do you approve of the minutes of the September 24, 2019, Telephone Town Hall General Membership Meeting?" Press one to approve the minutes of the September 24 meeting. Press two if you do not approve the minutes of the September 24 meeting. Once again, press one to approve the minutes, or two if you do not approve the minutes. Give it a little time for the results to come in.

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Glacier Effs-Samuel: As we wait, I'll mention again for our members' convenience, an audio file, printed transcript and minutes from each meeting are posted to the 'Get Involved' membership meeting section on our website shortly after each meeting. If you know a member who couldn't make it on the call tonight, you can let them know they can listen to the call or read the transcript in its entirety online. The results are in and the minutes of our last September 24 Telephone Town Hall meeting have been approved. 92% voted yes in favor of approving the town hall.

Glacier Effs-Samuel: Before I turn things over to President Hanley, I'd like to get to know you better, we'd like to get to know you better. Get your telephone keypads ready. As many of you likely know, UFCW Canada offers free courses to members and their families through webCampus. Our question is have you completed a Web Campus course? Press one if you've completed a webCampus course and press two if you have not. That's one if you've completed a web Campus course or two, if you have not. As I said, webCampus is a free online educational platform for UFCW Canada members and their families. It provides you with the opportunity to gain knowledge and learn new skills in a variety of areas, from computer and technology, to personal development, to food and retail, to health and safety. webCampus is affiliated with a number of colleges and universities that recognize these courses. The results are in: 8% of you have completed a webCampus course. 92% say no. For those of you who haven't tried the courses, I encourage you to check it out. Winter's coming so you'll have lots of time.

Glacier Effs-Samuel: Now, it's my pleasure and honour to introduce the President of our union, Wayne Hanley.

Wayne Hanley: Thank you, Glacier, and good evening to everyone on the line tonight. Thank you for joining us. There are numbers of things that I'd like to report since our last meeting. First on the agenda, I'd like to update you on some negotiations. We've had a busy couple of months with our members at our largest bargaining unit, that being Loblaws Great Food and Real Canadian Superstore, who recently voted to accept improvements to their union contract. I'm proud of what we achieved in this contract, including shortening progressions and the time it takes part-time to get to top rate and the most money we've seen negotiated into the contract for end rates in more than 15 years. More importantly, no concessions in this round of bargaining for our members at Loblaws Great Food and RCSS.

Wayne Hanley: Our contract covers approximately 12,500 of our members and it means job security and more money in our members' pockets. Since our last town hall, in total, we negotiated five contracts covering nearly 13,000 of our members who work in a variety of industries and sectors. I'm so proud of all the members who participated in the negotiation process, for those that represented their

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coworkers on negotiating committees, and those who took the time out of their busy schedules to come out and vote on a contract, I thank you. Our members' participation is critical, critical to building a vibrant and strong union.

Wayne Hanley: Just over three weeks ago, we welcomed 60 new members from Ryder Truck Rental. These members had the courage and they stood up united to face an employer's anti-union campaign. They got their union and we're proud to represent them. We certainly look forward to working with them to bring fairness to the workplace. Next, I'd like to congratulate all of the 42 scholarship winners. Each year, Local 1006 gives 42 of our members, or dependents of our members, \$1,006 towards their education. This year, we saw a record number of applicants, in fact, over a thousand. Access to good quality affordable education is so important to building a more equal society and it's getting even tougher with politicians like Doug Ford. At Local 1006A, we're happy to help our members and their dependents achieve their dreams. Thank you everyone that applied.

Wayne Hanley: Once again, we had great participation in our annual Light the Night walks in London, Ottawa, and Toronto, to support the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society of Canada. I want to thank our members for their incredible generosity in supporting the walks. If you haven't participated in a walk, I encourage you to join us next year. These walks are incredibly emotional. With so many people participating, you really understand the real difference that UFCW members have been making in the fight against this horrible disease. Since 1985, when we started our involvement with LLSC, UFCW across Canada has raised nearly 44 million dollars. That's right, 44 million dollars for lifesaving research. We're making a difference.

Wayne Hanley: Moving on, I want to thank everyone who participated in our membership survey. We had approximately 850 of our members participate and provide their feedback on the union, how we are doing and what we can do better. We appreciate the valuable insight and comments everyone provided, and you have my word that we will continue to work hard to improve and serve our members better.

Lastly from Ottawa, Canadians have elected a minority government. Working people may have a real opportunity to see a better life that is more affordable. Past minority governments have made important improvements including our Canada Pension Plan and Universal Healthcare. In this parliament, there is a real opportunity to make sure that all Canadians have access to the drugs their doctors prescribe to them. Pharmacare would save the country and employers hundreds of billions of dollars a year through a more efficient system that doesn't leave people behind. There's interesting times ahead in Ottawa and you can be sure that your union will be reaching out to elected officials to ensure the voice of working people, not just the corporate lobbyists are heard.

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Glacier Effs-Samuel: Thank you, Wayne. Once again, I just want to remind everyone, to ask a question just press star three on your phone keypad. Give your full question, name, and where you work to the operator and they'll pass it onto us. Again, press star three. Now, our union is continuing our work to help eliminate violence against women every year. Leading up to December 6, we participate in a memorial and our Women's Issues Network distributes white ribbons to raise awareness about the importance of this issue. If you're interested in participating in this campaign, please contact at win@ufcw1006a.ca. Now, it's my pleasure to welcome to our town hall, Debora De Angelis, Ontario regional director for UFCW Canada who will talk to us about the important issue and resources available to those who are suffering. As the Chair of the National Women and Gender Equity Committee, Debora has been at the forefront of this important issue for UFCW across Canada.

Debora De Angelis: Thank you, Glacier and Wayne for inviting me to participate.

Glacier Effs-Samuel: You're welcome, Debora. How big of an issue is violence against women in Canada? And, do you think this issue gets the attention it deserves?

Debora De Angelis: Great question. This is a huge issue and affects women of all ages, cultures, and backgrounds. Let me start with the definition of domestic violence or intimate partner abuse. Domestic violence is any form of physical, sexual, emotional, or psychological abuse including financial control, stalking, and harassment. It occurs between opposite or same sex intimate partners who may or may not be married, common law, or living together. It can also happen after a relationship has ended.

Debora De Angelis: Here's some facts about domestic violence. One in three workers have experienced domestic violence in their lifetime. Of those who have, 82% found that domestic violence negatively affected their workplace performance through distraction, tiredness, lateness, interruptions at work from the abuser, poor concentration, and absenteeism. 53% said they experienced violence at or near the workplace. 38% reported that domestic violence affected their ability to get to work. 37% said that it negatively impacted their coworkers. 5% lost their job as a result of domestic violence. The impact of gender-based violence is that it affects women's economic security as well and is one of the reasons why women on average have to work 14 more additional years... so, yes, to age 79, just to make what a man made by 65. Gender-based violence can be eradicated. There's no reason why it continues. Sexual harassment can be eliminated from our workplaces. Domestic violence can also be addressed through education. If we can raise enough awareness on this issue and show leadership, we can one day eliminate violence against women.

Glacier Effs-Samuel: Wow, Debora, those are some very important and shocking facts. What can our members do if they suspect a co-worker is a victim of abuse or violence?

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Debora De Angelis: There are three steps you can take when talking to your co-worker or member: See it, name it, check it, or the SNCit system. Number one, see it. Learn and treat your suspicions and concerns seriously. Two, name it. Name the warning signs as a concern. Always stick to the facts, as a bruise does not necessarily mean abuse. You might say, "I saw bruises" or "I heard yelling and I'm concerned about you." And three, check it. Ask questions such as, "Are you okay? Or, "What can I do to support you?" And confirm your assumptions on whether the member or your co-worker is experiencing abuse.

Debora De Angelis: Remember that hearing these questions can be very difficult for someone suffering abuse. So be patient and allow your co-worker or member to feel as though they are still in control of the conversation. They may deny the abuse and or react defensively and if they do, do not take it personally and leave the door open for future conversations. Some examples of think-it conversations are, "I've noticed you've been late to work more often lately. Is there anything bothering you?" Or, "You look upset after the phone call today. I'm worried about you. Are you okay?" Or, "I overheard your partner yelling at you on the phone today. Are you okay? Do you want to talk?" Never make judgements. Encourage your coworkers to talk through the union or human resources.

Glacier Effs-Samuel: SNCit, a new acronym to remember. We have many members who were not born or too young to remember the significance of December 6, each year. Can you tell us what happened that day and why it is so significant today?

Debora De Angelis: December 6, is the anniversary of the 1989, École Polytechnique Massacre in which an armed student murdered 14 women and injured 10 others in the name of fighting feminism. On December 6, Canadian flags on all federal buildings, including the Peace Tower on Parliament Hill in Ottawa, are flown half-mast. Everyone is encouraged to observe a minute of silence on December 6, and to wear a white ribbon or a purple ribbon as a commitment to end violence against women.

Debora De Angelis: Even though 30 years have passed, women still face gender-based violence every day. Remembering and bringing awareness to this important issue means that we are getting closer to our goal of eliminating gender-based violence in our homes, workplaces, and society.

Glacier Effs-Samuel: What has UFCW been doing to take action on this important issue?

Debora De Angelis: UFCW launched the #NoMore Campaign. The goal of this important campaign is to create awareness about gender-based violence in the workplace by calling out its different forms, such as harassment, sexual harassment, and assault. UFCW reached out to members and workers through an anonymous online survey to gain a better understanding of the realities that workers face daily. Visit our website for results of the survey. UFCW, as well, has a social media

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campaign for the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence. Please follow UFCW and share to amplify this important message. We have materials on our website. Feel free to visit ufcw.ca/women for PDFs that are easy to download. We also have sexual harassment and bystander intervention training, and these are just some of the initiatives that UFCW Canada is doing.

Glacier Effs-Samuel: That's excellent, Debora. What resources are available to women who are suffering from abuse and violence?

Debora De Angelis: There are some really great resources online. Google Canadian Labor Congress Domestic Violence to get the Canadian Labor Congress website. You can also visit UFCW.ca/women and you can also visit www.sheltersafe.ca as well. These are all really good sites for more information and resources.

<https://canadianlabour.ca/issues-research/domestic-violence-work/>

Glacier Effs-Samuel: Every year we observe the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence. Can you share with our listeners why these 16 days of activism are so important?

Debora De Angelis: The 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence is an international campaign that commences on November 25, which is the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, and ends on December 10, which is the Human Rights Day. Violence against women is this world's largest and most persistent human rights violation. Over 50% of Canadian women will experience an incident of violence at some point in their lives, the majority before they turn 25. These 16 days are a way that we can make our voices heard, our experiences known, since this is the first step to affect change. Help us amplify this message so that one day our sisters and daughters can live in a society free of gender-based violence.

Glacier Effs-Samuel: What is the union's message to women who may be currently suffering some abuse?

Debora De Angelis: When you are ready, your union is here to support you every step of the way. We can continue to be your advocate and let us know what you need.

Glacier Effs-Samuel: Debora, thank you so much for joining us today. If you want any further information about resources or want to participate in any of the campaigns mentioned, please contact us at win@ufcw1006a.ca. I'd like to remind the members that telephone operators are standing by to take down your questions and pass them on to us. Again, to ask a question, press star three.

Wayne Hanley: Glacier, we have a few questions that have come up and I think they're excellent questions. I'd like to address them. First one is from Audrey in Peterborough who asks, "What was the result of the vote on amending the bylaws dealing

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with the division structure?" Audrey, I can tell you and all the members that the members voted overwhelmingly to approve the amendment to the bylaws and removing that structure from the local union by over 90%.

Wayne Hanley: Robert from Toronto has a good question. His question is, "Will there ever be a time when we have physical meetings in the future?" Robert, I can tell you that whenever the membership in any one of our units feels it is necessary to have a meeting, that simply by contacting their union rep or by contacting me at the union office, we will hold a membership meeting as often as required. So, yes, we will have physical meetings.

Wayne Hanley: The last question I'd like to raise is another good question. It's around the UFCW webCampus. The question is, "Are union courses connected to any university and is that certificate valid from the university?" And, I would encourage Anna from Kingston and all members to go on the UFCW Canada website, that's ufcw.ca, look up webCampus and I believe the affiliation, one of the colleges or universities is Athabasca University, but there will be a list of credited courses that are recognized in post-secondary education institutions.

Glacier Effs-Samuel: Thanks Wayne. Remember, if you stay with us for the entire call, you'll have a chance to enter our contest. The winner has a choice of either two Toronto Maple Leaf tickets or a computer tablet.

Glacier Effs-Samuel: Now it's time for another poll question. The question is, "What would help you attend more union events or meetings?" Again, the question is, "What would help you attend more union events or meetings?" Press one if it's free food or coffee, press two – a more convenient time, press three – if it's a more convenient location, and press four – having people I know at the meeting would help me attend. Once again, the question before is what would help you attend more union events and meetings? Press one if it's more food or coffee, press two if it's a convenient time, and press three if it's a convenient location, press four if having people you know there matters.

Glacier Effs-Samuel: As we wait for the results to come in. I'll remind everyone that our union holds regular meetings and events for our members to participate in. We strongly encourage you to attend. Bring a co-worker along. Member participation is the heart of our strong union.

Glacier Effs-Samuel: The results are in. With us on the call today, 14% of you said free food or coffee would help you to attend more meetings and events. 13% of you said a more convenient time. 64% of you said a more convenient location and 9% said having people I know at the meeting would help me attend more meetings. Remember, check out your union board and the union Facebook page to find out about upcoming events.

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Glacier Effs-Samuel: It's my pleasure to welcome Executive Assistant to the President, Paul Docherty, for our segment on injured workers.

Paul Docherty: Thank you, Glacier. When workers get injured, they often face one of the toughest fights of their life. Often accidents and injuries can be life changing, leaving a worker unable to work or return to work immediately. Our WSIB Department works hard to help injured workers get the compensation they deserve. I'm pleased to invite local 1006A Senior WSIB Health and Safety Representative, Martha Villeda, to the town hall.

Martha Villeda: Thank you, Wayne and Paul, for having me here.

Paul Docherty: Martha, workplace injuries can happen to anyone. What are the most common types of injuries that our members are confronted with?

Martha Villeda: Due to the nature of our workplace, most of our frequent injuries are musculoskeletal injuries. These injuries affect human body movements in the musculoskeletal system. The most common musculoskeletal disorders include carpal tunnel syndrome, tendonitis, muscles and tendons strain, ligamentous sprain, tendon tension neck syndrome, rotator cuff tendonitis, epicondylitis, trigger finger, Dequervain's syndrome, degenerative disc disease, and the rupture or herniated discs. This one usually happens in the shoulder, elbows, wrists, and back.

Paul Docherty: Martha, there may be a lot of people on the line who don't know much about this issue. What should workers do when they are injured at work?

Martha Villeda: The first thing that our workers should do is report the injury immediately, seek medical attention. If you are offered modified duties, try to do it and if you cannot do the modified duties, do your best to explain your reasons why are you not able to do it. Keep in mind that WSIB does not follow your doctor's recommendation. Keep copies of everything WSIB and the doctor gives to you and write down the name of all medications that you're being prescribed when you're injured.

Paul Docherty: Can you share with our listeners, what is WSIB and what is its role with injured workers?

Martha Villeda: WSIB is Worker Safety and Insurance Board. It's an insurance company that provides benefits for workers. It was created over a century ago to provide workers who are injured, maimed, sick, or killed on the job with medical and financial support, but benefits paid out to injured workers have been in decline for years.

Paul Docherty: How has WSIB been functioning under the Doug Ford government?

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- Martha Villeda: The Ford government has imposed massive cuts to funding of legal aid. Injured workers will be hit particularly hard. Three community legal clinics that do the vital important work for injured workers had their budget cut by 22% to 30% by this government. That's for conservative government reduced WSIB costs to business by more than two billion since taking office. This means more than 222,000 employers across Ontario will have their premium reduced by almost 30%. This also mean less money coming into WSIB system and less money will inevitably lead to further reduction in compensation provided to workers who have been injured or made ill on the job. This money needs to be invested in WSIB to adequately quality provide injured worker with support that they deserve.
- Paul Docherty: Based on that part, what can workers expect out of the WSIB System?
- Martha Villeda: The mandate will be healthcare benefits and loss of earnings due to the workplace injury and illness.
- Paul Docherty: What does the union's WSIB Department do?
- Martha Villeda: We provide information and consultation regarding WSIB claims from the moment you have an accident or become ill due to your job. We work with members on helping them fill out numerous forms that are required, when they have an accident or become ill. We offer information regarding modified work and why you have to return to work even when your doctor has approved your time off. And, if members are being denied WSIB benefits, we can handle your appeal to WSIB and take it to the tribunal.
- Paul Docherty: Most importantly, what are the roadblocks workers currently face with WSIB?
- Martha Villeda: The first one is the new call center system that WSIB has implemented. In this systems, the worker is not able to work with the case manager. Leave messages that are not getting response. The waiting period to get approval is longer, and a lengthy process of appeal that can take eight months to a year.
- Paul Docherty: Martha, can you offer any tips or suggestions that may help to prevent workers and workplace injuries?
- Martha Villeda: First of all, follow the procedure. Do not attempt to cut corners at work, report hazards, know your health and safety committee members. Health and safety has to be first. If you feel that something may hurt you or put your life in danger, you have the right to refuse unsafe work under the Health and Safety Act.

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- Paul Docherty: Thank you, Martha, for sharing with us that important information. Members who are injured or made ill at work can always contact Martha for assistance with the claim.
- Glacier Effs-Samuel: Thank you Paul and Martha. Before you have the opportunity to enter into the draw for a tablet or a pair of Toronto Maple Leaf tickets, I'll turn it over to President Hanley.
- Wayne Hanley: Well, I'd just like to thank our guests this evening, Debora, and Paul, and Martha, as well as our moderator Glacier. Most importantly, I want to thank all of you on the line with us here tonight and thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedule to participate in the meeting tonight. I hope you have found the discussions and the information presented tonight beneficial. It's often said that the true measure of a society is how it treats its most vulnerable. Well, I'm so proud of the work our union does to help injured workers that become frustrated by a difficult WSIB system as well as our continued work towards a society free of gender-based violence. As our next meeting doesn't take place until next year, I'd like to acknowledge the valuable work that our members do. We know you all work hard in your workplaces. Local 1006A members work in all sectors across the province and quite frankly they help make the holidays happen. I want to wish all of our members and their families a safe and happy holiday season.
- Glacier Effs-Samuel: Thank you, Wayne. For those with questions that we were unable to get to, your union rep will be getting back to you within 24 hours. Please remember that an audio file and transcript of tonight's meeting will be posted on our website for your convenience. As well, the minutes of tonight's meeting will also be posted for your review and to be approved during the next meeting.
- Glacier Effs-Samuel: Now, we have one more piece of business to take care of. Our last question will enter you into the draw to win either a pair of Toronto Maple Leaf tickets or a tablet. The winner will be announced on our website tomorrow by 3 p.m. Pay close attention now. The time for the draw is now. I repeat, the time for the draw for the Maple Leaf tickets and our tablet is now. To enter, simply press one on your telephone keypad. Our website is www.ufcw1006a.ca. Once again, that's www.ufcw1006a.ca. For those that would like to leave us a question or comment, please stay on the line. I want to thank everyone for joining us and have a good evening.