

# THE REPORT

HEALTH SCIENCES ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

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## NEW PRESIDENT KANE TSE

EDUCATION LEAVE: KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

PLUS: INTRODUCING OUR NEW  
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY  
COLUMN

# INTRODUCING MYSELF AND LOOKING FORWARD TO 2022

As your newly-elected President, I thought that I should start my first report by introducing myself.

I grew up in Calgary, where I attended the University of Calgary. After university I moved to the San Francisco Bay Area for an internship and stayed there until I moved to Vancouver in 2002 with a BioTech/Pharmaceutical startup.

I've worked at the BC Cancer Agency since 2004, where I'm an Assistant Bioinformatics Coordinator. This means that I write software to analyze DNA sequence data in order to help with cancer treatment and research. For example, we can sequence the genome of a tumour to identify the mutation that caused that type of cancer. This allows patients to receive the best possible and personalized treatment. Like so many HSA members, I enjoy using my skills to be a part of the health care team at my workplace.

Outside of work, I am married with two adult kids and live in New Westminster.

I became a steward in 2013, and my union involvement has steadily increased since then. I became Chief Steward at my chapter, and then started learning from steward teams at other chapters.

In my Chief Steward role, I learned that as health care and social service professionals, HSA members are builders of our

workplaces. I believe that our members are the experts on their jobs and worksites. You know your job, the work you do, and the people you work with.

My first few months as President have been busy as I have learned the ins and outs of my new role. Over the summer I have been meeting with government to reinforce our message and the priorities of HSA members.

This work is all part of preparation for our union's major task over the next several months: bargaining. The majority of HSA members' contracts expire in the spring of 2022, meaning that bargaining will be a major focus starting in the fall and continuing into the new year.

Bargaining is an opportunity for each and every HSA member to use their voice. The past sixteen months have been filled with incredibly tough times, but they have also shown us that change is possible when we all work together.

Bargaining is a process of proposals, meetings, and conferences that depend on participation by and suggestions from HSA's membership. This is the time for you to share your ideas and propose solutions to help us build better workplaces.

This process will kick off in September with HSA's annual regional meetings.



HSA PRESIDENT KANE TSE

*"This is the time for you to share your ideas and propose solutions to help us build better workplaces."*

At the same time, local HSA chapters will hold meetings where members can propose and vote on bargaining proposals. Chapters will then submit their proposals to the HSA office for consideration at bargaining proposal conferences.

The bargaining proposal conferences will take place in October and November. In addition to considering bargaining proposals, conference delegates will elect members to sit on their bargaining committees. Then, in the new year, the bargaining committees will meet and negotiate with their employer counterparts.

I am honoured and delighted to serve as your HSA President, and I look forward to working alongside you both through the bargaining process and over the next two years.

## PAPERLESS REPORT NOW AVAILABLE

HSA members have the option to receive a paperless edition of *The Report* via email. If you would like to switch your subscription to this paperless edition, please send an email to [info@hsabc.org](mailto:info@hsabc.org) requesting we change your subscription. To help us with this process, please include your full name and worksite in the email.

Please note that we are only able to send *The Report* to personal e-mail addresses.

## 50 YEARS OF GROWTH AND SOLIDARITY

In June, we launched a special new 50th anniversary section of HSA's website at [50years.hsabc.org](http://50years.hsabc.org).

This website includes a video showcasing the achievements of HSA's members over the past 50 years, along with archival photos and a collection of stories that honour our union's history.



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## HSA TAKES ACTION ON TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

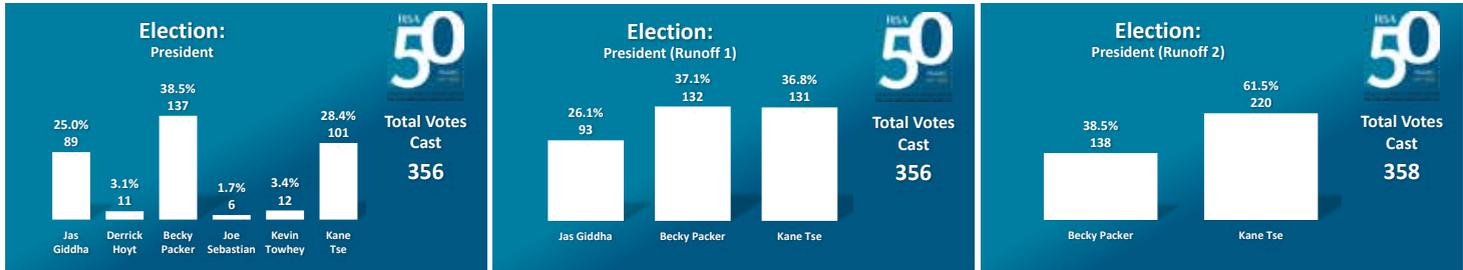
The ongoing discoveries of unmarked graves at former residential schools across Canada is shocking for many, traumatizing for generations of survivors, and a turning point for us all. It has deeply affected many HSA members.

After the discovery by Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation, delegates at HSA's 2021 Convention in June passed an extraordinary resolution calling on their union to take several actions. This included a \$25,000 donation to the Indian Residential Schools Survivors Society, an organization with a twenty-year history of providing essential services to Residential School Survivors, their families, and those dealing with intergenerational trauma.

In addition to the donation, HSA has taken other actions arising from the resolution, including issuing a public statement of support for the 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report and Calls to Action, and writing to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Premier John Horgan. Copies of the letters are posted on the HSA website.

# NEW HSA PRESIDENT ELECTED

Kane Tse, an Assistant Bioinformatics Coordinator from the BC Cancer Centre (Vancouver) was elected HSA President on the third ballot by delegates to HSA's June 2021 Convention. He succeeds Val Avery, who retired after serving as HSA's President from 2013-2021. You can read an interview with Kane Tse on page 10 of this magazine.



SCREENSHOTS FROM HSA'S 2021 VIRTUAL CONVENTION

# PENSION WORKSHOPS MOVE ONLINE

In-person Municipal Pension Plan (MPP) workshops are normally very popular with HSA members; however, due to COVID restrictions they have not been held since early 2020. The MPP has now relaunched their workshops as Zoom webinars featuring a live facilitator who is able to answer your questions.

There are two workshops: "Making the Most of Your Pension" for early- and mid-career members, and "Approaching Retirement" for those within five years of retiring. The workshops are 75 minutes long, and are offered several times per week. Members can register online via the MPP website: <https://mpp.pensionsbc.ca/>.

# HSA AT THE 36th MINER'S MEMORIAL



The 36th annual Miner's Memorial, presented by the Cumberland Museum and Archives on Vancouver Island in collaboration with the Campbell River, Courtenay and District Labour Council, was a celebration of workers and their families and a call for a renewed commitment for safe and healthy workplaces, justice and equity, and bread and roses for all.

HSA was represented at the memorial by Region 1 Director and Secretary-Treasurer Becky Packer, pictured here laying flowers as part of the June 19, 2021 graveside vigil in Cumberland, BC. The vigil was the only part of the Miner's Memorial held this year, due to COVID restrictions. It is intended to commemorate the lives lost in the Cumberland mines and pay tribute to those who fought on their behalf for safer working conditions and worker rights.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY BECKY PACKER

# NEW REGIONAL DIRECTORS ELECTED



JING-YI NG (PHOTO PROVIDED BY JING-YI NG)

## **Region 3 (Burnaby, Tri-Cities, and New Westminster): Jing-Yi Ng**

Jing-Yi is a clinical pharmacist at Burnaby Hospital, where she is also the Assistant Chief Steward. She has also served as a member of the union's Health Science Professionals Bargaining Association bargaining committee.

Outside of work, Jing-Yi plays volleyball and softball, recently adopted a dog, and loves meeting people.

## **Region 5 (Children's and Women's Hospitals, all other Vancouver facilities, Vancouver and Fraser Valley Cancer Centres): Jill Slind**

Jill Slind is a computational biologist at the BC Cancer Centre, where she analyzes DNA for cancer research, and serves as steward and joint OSH committee member.

Jill is an avid knitter who is known for her "Wall of Wool", visible on Zoom meetings. She is the President of the West Coast Knitters Guild, where she helps organize an annual craft fair to raise money to support a domestic violence shelter run by CHIMO Crisis Services.



JILL SLIND (PHOTO BY VALERIE RYAN)



JANICE MORRISON

## **Region 9 (Cranbrook, Kootenays and Rockies): Janice Morrison**

Janice is a physiotherapist at Kootenay Lake Hospital. She previously served as a Regional Director from 2009-2019.

Janice is in her third term as a Nelson City Councillor, and also serves as a Director for the Regional District of Central Kootenay. Nelson is one of a very few communities in BC that owns its own electric utility. Janice has an interest in climate science, and hopes to share the knowledge she has gained working on her community's climate initiatives with her fellow HSA members.

The Regional Directors for **Region 1 (Nanaimo and Vancouver Island North)** and **Region 7 (Surrey and Fraser Valley)** were both re-elected. They are Becky Packer, a physiotherapist at the Cumberland Health Centre, and Jas Giddha, a medical radiation technologist at Surrey Memorial and Peace Arch Hospitals.



BECKY PACKER



JAS GIDDHA

# Education Leave: A Brief Guide to Your Collective Agreement Rights

BY KATIE RIECKEN AND COLETTE BARKER

*This article is only a brief overview of your Collective Agreement rights. If you have questions about your specific situation, we encourage you to speak with your steward or contact the union office.*

Continuing education is important for health and social service professionals. That's why HSA members, in addition to having access to professional development funds, scholarships, and bursaries, have negotiated strong collective agreement language supporting their right to education leave, often with pay.

Education leave helps HSA members participate in courses to upgrade their skills; this can range from a half-day workshop to a Ph.D. This education allows members to keep up-to-date with the latest techniques and technologies, to pursue new job opportunities, and to refine their skills. But employers and patients also benefit from this education through better patient care and improved recruitment and retention.

Employers often use budgetary and operational restraints as excuses to deny education leave. Common attempts to justify the denial of education leaves include the lack of staff to backfill or the lack of money in the department budget. However, your employer's education policy and processes cannot override your collective agreement rights. HSA has

a strong record of resolving members' education leave grievances and we encourage members to contact their steward if they are denied education leave.

## **Health Science Professionals Bargaining Association**

Education leave is covered by Article 17, Leave – Education, of the HSPBA collective agreement.

### *Employee-requested leave*

HSPBA members are entitled to one day of employer-paid education leave for each day you give of your own time – a 50/50 split. If your course is a partial day, you still split the time equally with the employer. The day of “own time” that you give includes any day that you're not scheduled to work – it could be vacation, banked overtime, or even a day of unpaid leave. Regular full-time employees can receive up to 37.5 hours per collective agreement year (April 1 to March 31), and are also entitled to reimbursement from their employer for up to \$600 for related expenses.

If you are a part-time or casual employee with questions about employee-requested leave, please contact the union office.

### *Employer-requested leave*

If your employer requires you to take a course, then they must pay for all of the costs as well as providing you with

paid time off to take the course. Employer-requested education leave is work, and doesn't count against the 37.5 hours of employee-requested leave.

## **Community Health Bargaining Association**

Education leave is covered by Article 19, Education Leave, of the CBA collective agreement.

### *Employer-requested leave*

CBA members have the right to paid leave whenever their employer requests in writing that they take a course or examination. The employer must also cover costs and reasonable expenses.

### *In-service education*

If you are scheduled by your employer to attend any in-service education seminars or on-line courses, you must be paid for your time.

### *Unpaid education leave*

After three years' continuous service, you may request an unpaid leave to take courses “relating to health service delivery”. You need to request this leave, in writing, as long as possible in advance, and for a leave of four or more months you must make every effort to give six months' notice.

## **Community Social Services**

Education leave is covered by Article 25, Career

Development, of the CSS collective agreement.  
*Employer-requested leave*

You have the right to leave at your basic rate of pay to take courses or attend conferences, conventions, seminars, workshops, or symposiums, at the request of your employer. The employer will pay for fees, books, and expenses.

*Employee-requested leave*

You may be granted leave, either without pay, with pay, or with partial pay, to take work-related courses that you wish to enroll in.

### **Nurses' Bargaining Association**

Education leave is covered by Article 35, Leave - Education - Staff Development Programs, of the NBA agreement.

*In-service programs*

Your employer has the right to determine that an in-service is compulsory; you must be paid for your time for attending.

*Employer-requested leave*

You have the right to leave with pay to take courses at the request of your employer. The employer will also cover tuition, books, and travel and meal expenses.

*Employee-requested leave*

You are entitled to one day of employer-paid leave for each day you give of your own time - a 50/50 split. The day you give can be unpaid leave, a voluntary shift exchange, or vacation.

# A Great Pair: Education Leave and Professional Development Funding

In addition to education leave, many HSA members also have access to professional development funding. Members can apply to these funds for funding to cover part of their education or training costs. More information about each fund, along with application forms, can be found on the HSA website.

Health Science Professionals Bargaining Association (HPSBA) members have access to ongoing professional development funding through the HSP Professional Development Fund, which was negotiated as part of their 2019-2022 collective agreement. Funding is up to \$1000 per application; applications are currently being accepted for courses started between April 1, 2021 and March 31, 2022.

Members covered by the HSPBA also have access to a new \$3 million professional development fund, announced on June 3, 2021. This funding was secured by HSA working in partnership with the provincial government. The funding is to be allocated to training and upgrading skills for HSPBA members working in professions experiencing shortages, or in rural and remote locations, as well as ongoing required professional development for all HSPBA members. Applications to the fund are now open, and will close on August 31, 2022.

Community Health Bargaining Association members can apply to the Community Health Retraining Fund for up to \$10,000 towards skills upgrading, training and professional development that will "enhance their ability to stay in the community health care sector".

HSA RPNs covered by the Nurses' Bargaining Association can apply to the RPN Professional Development Fund for funding for the cost of professional development courses and events. Funding is up to \$1000 per application and applications are accepted on a rolling basis.

Members covered by the Community Social Services agreement can apply to the Labour and Education Fund (LAEF) for group or individual funding for training to enhance your skills. The training must start between April 1, 2019 and March 31, 2022.

HSA also provides a number of educational awards for full and part-time members, Indigenous students, and children of members each year. Application forms for HSA scholarships and bursaries will be available on the HSA website in November 2021.



KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR THIS ICON ON HSA'S FACEBOOK AND INSTAGRAM PAGES AS IT SIGNIFIES INFORMATION ABOUT EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR HSA MEMBERS LIKE YOU!

# HSA Members Stepping Forward

BY KARL RILEY

Here at HSA, we know how committed our members are to their communities. Whether it's in acute care, community health, or social services, our members are on the front lines every day making life better for people and ensuring they have access to the services they count on.

So it's not surprising that two of our very own HSA members will be running in the upcoming federal election, which will be held September 20.

Laura Dupont is a Program Administrator at SHARE Family and Community Services in Coquitlam, as well as a City Councilor in Port Coquitlam. She will be running with Jagmeet Singh and the NDP in the riding of Coquitlam-Port Coquitlam.

Sonia Andhi, a social worker and mental health liaison at Delta Hospital and in the community, will be running in the riding of Surrey Centre, also for the NDP.

Andhi says that working in health care is incredibly rewarding, but that there are also real challenges. "We need a federal government that invests in healthcare. Canada is the only major country with a public healthcare system that doesn't cover prescription drugs. Jagmeet Singh and the NDP have a real plan for Canadians including one for a truly public pharmacare system so people don't have to choose between prescriptions and paying rent."

For her part, Dupont says that she decided to run with

the NDP because they are the only party that shares her commitment to making life better for working people. It's this commitment that pushed her to start working at SHARE almost ten years ago. "When you help people in your community get the support they need, it's a very rewarding experience. Right now I see our federal government working only for the wealthy and the well-connected. But Jagmeet Singh and the NDP are actually working for regular Canadians like you and me. I'm proud to be a part of that team."

As active union members, both said they think it's important that unions and their members get involved in politics.

Dupont told us she's proud of what the labour movement has accomplished here in Canada, but that there's still much more to do. "If it wasn't for unions, working people wouldn't get a fair shake. But we need to fight not just for ourselves, but for everyone in Canada, especially people from historically marginalized groups like the BIPOC and LGBTQ2S+ communities."

Andhi agrees. "Unions and union members can bring about real change when they get involved in the political process. The HSA has done amazing work advocating for paid sick leave and a public pharmacare system. These are things that will make a real difference in people's lives and I am proud to say that my union supports them."

Like Dupont and Andhi, HSA members all across our

province work hard every day to make a real difference in people's lives. They deliver services that families count on. This shared commitment and dedication to one's community is what makes our union strong and the people in it so special.

To learn more about their campaigns, including information on how to get involved, you can visit their websites:

- [lauradupont.ndp.ca](http://lauradupont.ndp.ca)
- [soniaandhi.ndp.ca](http://soniaandhi.ndp.ca)



FROM TOP: LAURA DUPONT AND SONIA ANDHI

# Andrew Tran, Biomedical Engineering Technician

BY LAURA BUSHEIKIN

When Andrew Tran became a steward, he was only 19 years old, making him one of the youngest stewards in HSA. He'd also just begun his career as a biomedical engineering technician (usually called a "biotech"), in his first job ever, at Cariboo Memorial Hospital in Williams Lake.

That was almost two years ago. Today, Tran, now 21, speaks with confidence about the many ways youth can be an asset not just in his profession, but throughout the health care sector.

"Young people are always willing to learn and try new things. They are enthusiastic about adapting to new technology, which is so important, because the technology changes every year," he says.

"And because young people have a long career in front of us, we are thinking about what health care will look like in the future, even 30 or 40 years down the road, so we're looking ahead and getting ready to innovate and adapt."

That eagerness to learn is part of what motivated Tran to take on the steward position. Also, he saw the work as a way to

connect with colleagues.

"In my work as a biotech, relationships are really important. It's not like we spend our days in a basement surrounded by technology. Yes, we work with machines, but we also communicate with other health care workers, because they have to call you and tell you what's wrong with the machine. If they trust us, they will call us right away. This can make a big difference. Gaining trust and communicating are very important for my job," says Tran.

Because COVID hit just when Tran was getting started, attending in-person training was out of the question. Instead, he was mentored by the hospital's chief steward, learning by watching and taking on small, and then not-so-small, challenges. Tran recently relocated to Vancouver General Hospital, where he plans to continue being active in HSA, including finally taking the steward training.

Tran is also looking forward to going to convention. He says he's especially excited about attending workshops for youth and for immigrant members, where he can connect with people who share similar expe-

riences and points of view.

Tran grew up in Vietnam and came to Vancouver in 2015 as an international student, after falling in love with Canada during a family holiday. "I really liked the approach to education in Canada. It's more hands on, with labs and practical activities. Also, it's a more balanced life. Back in Vietnam, I was in school from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.," he says. Tran completed high school in Vancouver, and then went straight into the biomedical engineering technologist program at the British Columbia Institute of Technology, earning a diploma two years later.

Biomed, he says, fit his interests and also honoured his lineage. "Both my parents were pharmacists, and they wanted me to do something medical. I've always liked playing around with machines. Biomed blends both of those."

Tran is heading back to school part-time this fall to work towards a bachelor of applied science degree at UBC. "Learning is one thing you can do every day and forever, which I'm going to do. There's no age where you have to stop learning," says Tran.

“

Yes, we work with machines, but we also communicate with other health care workers, because they have to call you and tell you what's wrong with the machine. If they trust us, they will call us right away. This can make a big difference. Gaining trust and communicating are very important for my job”

- ANDREW TRAN, BIOTECH, VANCOUVER GENERAL HOSPITAL

# An Interview with Kane Tse, HSA President

BY DAVID BIEBER

*Shortly after Kane Tse was elected President at HSA's 50th Anniversary Convention, he sat down with HSA's MSC Communications, David Bieber, for an introductory interview.*

## **As HSA's new president, what are your immediate goals?**

My immediate goals are to prepare us for the bargaining of new contracts just ahead. We're already working on multiple fronts to make sure that issues of workload, shortages, recruitment and retention are being brought to the forefront in our discussions with the government.

## **And what do you think are your longer term priorities?**

I'd like to develop new ways for members to interact. In the labour movement our power comes from working together, and having just attended the virtual convention for the Canadian Labour Congress, I was interested to see our delegates using a chat platform called Discord, answering questions for each other and supporting our speakers as they made powerful arguments from the microphone. It showed me that even on a virtual platform we can strengthen our links and be a real force for change. I want to see that energy come to life at chapter meetings.

I also want to work with members and staff to shape the next five-year strategic plan for the union. With increased government investment in new hospitals and expansion of facilities, HSA will see increased membership, and we need to have a strategy to manage that growth. I want to make sure that we look ahead, know where we are heading, and how we plan to get there.

## **Tell us a little about your background in music - what instrument did you play, and are you still performing?**

I play piano, and was part of a men's vocal group. You might say that we were aspiring to be a 90s era boy band, but unfortunately without the success. My travels with the group took me to the former Soviet Union, Scandinavia and Central Europe as well as Australia and New Zealand. These days, my performances are limited to talking to people rather than singing to them.

## **And what sort of technology start up where you involved in?**

I worked at a pharmaceutical startup, and that is what brought me to Vancouver after I graduated from university. When you're in a small company, you become a jack-of-all-trades, and I did everything from servicing the desktop computers to washing dishes and sorting through legal documents to protect our patents.

## **Do you think your experience in the tech sector offers any lessons for your role as president?**

Absolutely. In the tech sector, things move very fast, and those who don't change with the times get passed by the competition. In a similar manner in health care, we've seen how the COVID-19 pandemic very quickly upended everybody's daily lives from their personal time to their work. Through it all, we stayed functioning as a society, and I think we succeeded because we relied on the core skills that brought us to where we are today. For me, it's a reminder that although I'm in a different and unfamiliar role, I still have many skills and experiences that I have been using through my career that I can rely on.

**Tell us about your profession as a bioinformatics co-ordinator.**

Bioinformatics is about combining biology, genomics and computer science to interpret the data contained within DNA. With three billion bases in the human genome, that's more data than you can put into an Excel spreadsheet, so we have to develop new ways to interpret this information. Alongside clinicians, scientists and other HSA members at BC Cancer, we've worked together to build personalized medicine that will identify the DNA mutations driving a specific tumour. This gives oncologists a very clear picture of which metabolic pathways are affected, and helps them precisely choose the targeted treatments to affect that pathway. It's an exciting field to be part of, and I hope it will be adopted widely to revolutionize how we do medicine beyond cancer.

**Does coming from a relatively small and highly-specialized discipline like this inform your thinking about the challenge of representing a union with such a diverse range of professions?**

Early-on, I felt HSA didn't understand my work, because there weren't many other members who were in genomics or bioinformatics. This motivated me to become active in the union and, and I got to know more about other HSA professions. And I learned that we are more similar than different. We share the same values, we're educated professionals who care about one another and our patients, and we are a union of warm and welcoming people. We may come many different professions, but HSA fights for the things that we share in common.



Kane Tse, HSA's first president from the BIPOC community, succeeds Val Avery. Avery was a long-time activist in the union, taking on a steward role soon as she joined the union as a physiotherapist at Victoria's Royal Jubilee Hospital after graduating from UBC. She served as a steward, job action coordinator, member-at-large, board member, temporary labour relations officer, Bargaining Committee Chair, and vice-president before being elected president in 2013 until her retirement in 2021. She also served as chair of the Canadian Health Professionals Secretariat, advocating for health science professionals across the country, and as an officer of the BC Federation of Labour and National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE).

# A Stronger Safety Net for HSA Members: The Enhanced Disability Management Program

How would you take care of your family if you got sick or became unable to work?

We assume our health benefits will take care of us, but until recently, disability management programs varied from employer to employer, leaving a patchwork of coverage with many holes.

That's why ten years ago, HSA started working to develop the Enhanced Disability Management Program (EDMP). Jointly developed with employers and other unions, EDMP came into effect in 2013 and has gradually expanded to cover most HSA members. It is an employee-centred, proactive and customized disability management program for employees with both occupational and non-occupational illnesses and injuries.

EDMP works with members in a variety of situations, including those who are:

- Off work on a medical leave;
- Living with a chronic medical condition and having difficulties at work;
- Returning to work from a medical leave;
- In need of modifications to work duties or hours because of a medical condition;
- Struggling with a Substance Use Disorder; or
- Seeking information about available medical supports and services.

Employees who participate in the program benefit from a holistic Case Management Plan that may include medical intervention, transitional work, a

graduated return to work, workplace modifications, vocational rehabilitation, and/or retraining.

## Who is eligible?

If you're a regular full-time or part-time employee, you are automatically referred after one missed shift for workplace illness or injury, or five consecutive missed shifts due to a non-work-related illness or injury.

If you are a casual employee or a regular employee struggling due to a medical condition,



participation is voluntary and you can self-refer into EDMP at any time.

## How can EDMP help?

A case management plan (CMP) is developed for employees who participate in the EDMP, and includes regular reviews and progress updates. Supports provided through EDMP are based on the assessment of factors such as prognosis, capabilities and limitations, skill and education, and the likelihood of a return to work.

EDMP assists with the return to work process, including utilizing transitional work and alternate work opportunities, as well as temporary or permanent modifications where necessary.

In addition, EDMP is intended to ensure a more seamless process

for employees who may require support from the Long Term Disability Plan.

## Who is involved, and how will my union support me?

As a union member, you will have a designated union representative who will assist you with the EDMP process. Your EDMP representative will answer your questions regarding the program and your needs, support you while you're enrolled in the program, and advocate for your rights and needs.

The only people involved in the program are you, your physician and/or health care providers, the union, and your employer.

## Protection of privacy

Medical information gathered under EDMP is kept in the strictest confidence and is only available to the disability management team working directly on your file.

Your manager/supervisor will be informed (on a need-to-know basis only) about the anticipated duration of your absence, and functional information required to support you at work or assist you to return to work safely.

## How do I learn more?

For more information about services or supports that may be available to you, please get in touch with your regional EDMP representative. You can find their contact information, along with more information about the program, at [www.hsabc.org/member-benefits/edmp](http://www.hsabc.org/member-benefits/edmp).

# Board of Directors Attendance Record

Resolution 54, passed at the 2021 Convention, requires that HSA “publish attendance records and activities of the Board of Directors, quarterly in the HSA Report”. As this is the first issue of *The Report* published after Convention, this is the initial publication of these records.

## Attendance of the Board of Directors at Board and Committee meetings that took place from April 1 - June 30, 2021.

Meetings/Webex Calls:	Number of Meetings	*Kane Tse	Becky Packer	**Derrick Hoyt	*Jing-Yi Ng	***Joe Sebastian	*Jill Slind	Tara Chen	****Jas Giddha	Cherylee Hylands	*Janice Morrison	Mandi Ayers
		President	Region 1	Region 2	Region 3	Region 4	Region 5	Region 6	Region 7	Region 8	Region 9	Region 10
Board of Directors (Apr - June 4)	5	n/a	5	3	n/a	2	n/a	5	2	5	n/a	5
Board of Directors (June 5 - 30)	3	3	3	3	3	1	3	3	1	3	3	3
Executive (Apr - June 4)	1	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Executive (June 5 - 30)	1	1	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	n/a
Constitutional & Org Policy (Apr - June 4)	2	n/a	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Elections (Apr - June 4)	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	3
Political Action (Apr - June 4)	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	n/a
OH&S (Apr - June 4)	1	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	n/a
Resolutions (Apr - June 4)	4	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	4	n/a	n/a
<b>Total meetings attended in Q2</b>		<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>11</b>

Summary	Kane Tse	Becky Packer	Derrick Hoyt	Jing-Yi Ng	Joe Sebastian	Jill Slind	Tara Chen	Jas Giddha	Cherylee Hylands	Janice Morrison	Mandi Ayers
	President	Region 1	Region 2	Region 3	Region 4	Region 5	Region 6	Region 7	Region 8	Region 9	Region 10
Total meetings scheduled	4	12	9	3	8	3	11	9	13	4	11
Total meetings attended	4	12	7	3	3	3	11	4	13	4	11
	100%	100%	78%	100%	38%	100%	100%	44%	100%	100%	100%

\*Term began on June 4, 2021

\*\*Derrick Hoyt sent Regrets for the April 7, 2021 meeting

\*\*\*Joe Sebastian was recused by the Board due to a conflict of interest at the April 7, 2021 meeting.

\*\*\*\*Jas Giddha sent Regrets for the June 24, 2021 meeting.

Committees not listed above did not meet in Q2.



President  
Kane Tse

Region 1  
Becky Packer

Region 2  
Derrick Hoyt

Region 3  
Jing-Yi Ng

Region 4  
Joe Sebastian

Region 5  
Jill Slind



Region 6  
Tara Chen

Region 7  
Jas Giddha

Region 8  
Cherylee Hylands

Region 9  
Janice Morrison

Region 10  
Mandi Ayers

# Education Spotlight: Reana Deng

*We wanted to hear from HSA members in their own words about why they chose to participate in HSA's education programs. Reana Deng, a speech-language pathologist (SLP) in Victoria, graciously volunteered to be our first participant.*

## **Could you please introduce yourself?**

My name is Reana Deng. I am a queer non-binary Chinese-Canadian born to immigrant parents in Vancouver. My pronouns are she/her and they/them, with a preference for they/them.

I have been an HSA member since I started working for VIHA as a speech-language pathologist in early 2020. I have been involved in social justice and political activism since my second year of undergraduate studies.

## **What led you to your career?**

I had enrolled in university as a health sciences student, but it turned out to be focused on public health and policy, while I was more interested in the clinical and direct patient care aspects. I was contemplating what to do next when my mom's friend approached me; she was looking for young people to convince to join the field of SLP. She sold me - eight years later here I am!

My favourite area to work in is dysphagia; as an avid foodie, I am passionate about safe swallowing and maintaining pleasure from food. SLPs also work with communication disorders including language disorders such as aphasia and motor speech disorders such as dysarthria. I can't think of

anything more essential to the human experience than eating and communicating, so I feel extremely grateful to be able to help people with these functions.

## **Can you tell the story of your involvement with HSA?**

When I felt a little settled into my career, I looked for a way to get involved with my union. I went to my first chapter meeting and ended up as co-chief steward of my chapter. Since then, I have gained so much knowledge about the essential role that unions play in the workplace. I get the same satisfaction from helping a fellow HSA member with how they're feeling at work as I do when I help a patient with how they're feeling about their swallowing or communication.

After I learned more about the collective agreement, and dealt with a few grievances, it became extremely clear to me that it is important to be familiar with your collective agreement and to know who to approach for help if you are unsure about anything in your workplace. Oftentimes, employers aren't acting out of ill intent, but things can get missed in busy health care workplaces. Being active in HSA helps employers and workers abide by the collective agreement, which is in the best interests of everyone

involved.

As a young worker and a casual, I found that often the people who asked me questions were other casuals or young workers who felt comfortable speaking with a peer about their concerns. I was able to give my colleagues information and advice that helped them plan their work hours, plan their leave, understand their benefits, access education funds, advocate for workload, and more! Your union is one of the best resources you have in your workplace and in your career as a whole, so what better time to get involved than right at the start?

If you've ever felt like our healthcare system could be improved, which I think is something we can all agree on, then getting involved in your union is one of the best ways to have your voice heard and to make change on a larger scale. We need a diverse variety of members involved and engaged to represent our needs to the employer and that definitely includes young/new workers who need support to grow and flourish in our careers.

## **What drew you to HSA education?**

My personal goals in life are to learn, improve, and share my knowledge with others.

Social justice is one area of learning that is extremely important to me and I believe it's absolutely necessary to create a functional society for everyone. HSA has been offering education opportunities on social justice topics that I was already interested in, but specifically addressed to health care workers. What a fantastic way to improve myself, my practice, and the way I interact with my community all at the same time!

**Why should HSA members consider participating in their union's education programs?**

One of the major things I look for when I am learning from someone is what their credentials are. Lived experience is one of the most important credentials there is. Every speaker at an HSA education program I attended has lived experience, academic experience, and teaching experience in the topics they

are teaching on. Thus, each course provided a truly holistic and integrated learning experience – no piece introduced was left unconnected. Even the breaks could be a part of the learning process!

Education can also be a great way to improve your practice with diverse patients as well as working with diverse colleagues. I found that the courses were very accessible to both those who were new to this kind of learning and for people who are more familiar with the issues. It felt wonderful to be in an environment where everyone present genuinely cares about social issues and is passionate about doing better. On top of that, you get your day's wages compensated by HSA, so losing out on money isn't an issue!

**Have you learned anything in your union activism that you bring to your life outside of HSA?**

Definitely! Knowing more about the history of our union within the larger labour movement has made me even more appreciative of how many rights and resources we have fought to have access to as health sciences workers. Knowing more about how the union operates has given me insight into how much more progress we can and will continue to fight for. From the social justice education sessions, I've found that they have all helped in unlearning the white supremacy and colonialist beliefs that our society is based on. Social justice learning is as freeing and healing for the self as it is for the community as a whole! In the words of Martin Luther King Jr., "No one is free until we are all free".

REANA DENG (WITH EGGS AND DAISY)



# Kent DesRochers: Honouring A Health and Safety Champion

Every year, the HSA Occupational Health and Safety Committee awards the David Bland Award to an HSA member who has demonstrated leadership to improve occupational health and safety at their worksite and beyond.

The award was established in 2007 and honours the memory of David Bland, a vocational counsellor and HSA member from Richmond Mental Health who was killed at work by a former client. His death is an important reminder to us all about the importance of taking action to prevent workplace violence.

This year's David Bland Award recipient is Kent DesRochers, a registered psychiatric nurse in Mental Health and Substance Use at St. Paul's Hospital in Vancouver. Over his thirty plus year career, Kent has been dedicated to social justice and workplace health and safety.

DesRocher's work with health and safety has been particularly noted by his HSA peers and colleagues. However, his work is recognized across his unit and his nomination for the David Bland award was enthusiastically supported by colleagues from several unions and even staff from other agencies.

It was meaningful to learn that DesRochers has a personal connection to the namesake of the award, as he worked with David Bland at Mental Health Emergency Services in Richmond early in his career.



KENT DESROCHERS RECEIVES THE DAVID BLAND AWARD FROM HSA PRESIDENT KANE TSE IN A SMALL, COVID-SAFE EVENT

DesRocher's colleagues feel that he has been instrumental in ensuring that all staff on his unit, the Transition Care Centre (TCC), receive appropriate training in Non-Violent Crisis Intervention Training. He has also been dedicated to ensuring environmental safety in the TCC. His efforts resulted in improvements in design and layout of the unit, making a safer environment for workers and clients.

The TCC is a unique unit, likely the only one of its kind in Canada, as it offers transitional shelter to patients with mental health or addictions diagnoses who are discharged from St. Paul's Hospital and need a safe place to stay.

DesRochers has been the sole source of education

and training for members in his unit in a wide range of safety topics from teaching workers about psychosis and substances, to communication techniques for working with clients who have suffered trauma.

His commitment to health and safety goes beyond the doors of the unit, as Kent has developed new referral forms and worked with social workers on discharges for clients to designated community centres.

DesRochers has been recognized by national organizations for this work, his leadership, and his commitment at all levels. We're thrilled that he has now also been honoured by his colleagues and his union.

# Staff Profile: Heather Williams

**Name and Job Title:** Heather Williams, Director of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

**What you actually do, in your own words:** EDI is about changemaking on structural levels which involves analyzing and disrupting the various systems, practices and policies that historically and currently oppress and marginalize groups of people. EDI is about disrupting business as usual. An EDI lens asks 'who benefits from this (policy, practice, approach), and at whose expense?' and is ultimately about working towards widening the narrowness of 'normal' so that all people feel welcomed with respect and dignity. In order to do this EDI needs to take a multi-pronged approach with policy, practice, education and needs to be done in collaboration with diverse groups of people.

**Why this matters:** For too long too many people have been harmed by white supremacy, colonialism, ableism, sexism, heterosexism, classism and much more.

**Favourite part of your job:** Witnessing transformative learning moments in myself and others, figuring out and innovating new ways of doing things so that they might be more inclusive, and working with a good team.

HEATHER WILLIAMS

**At HSA since:** July 5th, 2021

**Go-to song for an energy boost:** I don't really have one... my family and I listened to ABBA at dinner the other night and that was pretty fun.

**If you could be famous for anything, what would you choose:** As a more introverted person fame looks exhausting to me.

**Literary, TV, or movie character most inspiring to you:** I have really been enjoying Pema Chodron this past year, in particular Welcoming the Unwelcome and Don't Bite the Hook.

**Your perfect day looks like:** Coffee and a good read, some kind of exercise, being on or near the water with my kids, a good meal with loved ones and a solid sleep.

**Secret talent unrelated to your job:** I'm not sure I'm talented, but I like to paint.

**What solidarity means to you:** Working together with and through diverse differences for justice.



# OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY Q&A: HOW CAN I HELP?

BY MIKE WISLA

HSA'S HEALTH AND SAFETY ADVOCATES ANSWER QUESTIONS RELATED TO WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY

**Q. I would like to support my colleagues and make our workplace safer, but I'm not sure how to do this. What can I do? How does occupational health and safety work?**

A. There are many opportunities for HSA members to get involved in supporting the physical and psychological health and safety of their fellow union members. Recent changes in policies have created a number of new committees and opportunities for members who want to take on this work.

The main way to start doing this work is to join your workplace's Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JOSH committee), which is the voice of workers in Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) in the workplace. The JOSH committee is made up of worker reps and employer reps working together to recommend, advise, investigate, and inspect with the goal of creating a safer workplace.

Becoming a member of your JOSH committee can take one of two forms: becoming an OHS Steward or simply becoming a JOSH committee rep. Both of these roles are chosen by the members of the chapter, usually at a chapter meeting, to serve the members of the chapter. The main difference is that OHS Steward is a larger role. In addition to serving as JOHS committee members, OHS stewards provide support and advocacy by working as part of the HSA steward team at their chapter.

No matter which role you take on, you will be provided

with training. All members of JOSH committees are entitled to eight hours of paid annual leave for training. As a new committee member, you're also entitled to an additional eight hours of training in your first six months on the committee to help you learn about your role(s) on the committee.

OHS Stewards are also entitled to register for OHS Steward training offered by HSA's education department. This two-day course provides a strong background in occupational health and safety as well as member support and advocacy. HSA also provides additional educational opportunities for OHS stewards through our annual OHS conference, along with other developmental opportunities.

On each JOSH committee all members, whether worker reps or employer reps, have equal status. This equal status is reflected in the selection of co-chairs of the committee. All JOSH committees have a co-chair appointed by the employer, who has a management function, and a co-chair chosen by the workers. The worker co-chair is a member of one of the unions represented on the committee. In large acute care facilities there can be three to six different unions at the table; in smaller settings there may be only HSA.

Each JOSH committee has its own terms of reference that explain how the committee will function. These terms of reference will include the number of seats on the committee for representatives from each union at the worksite. The number of seats is calculated by a formula based on the number of members at a jobsite.

There is frequently a need for more JOSH committee mem-

bers than there are OHS stewards; this is why there is often a need for HSA members to serve as JOSH committee members. JOSH committee members perform a variety of duties (set out in the Workers' Compensation Act) in their role as committee members. This includes attending monthly meetings, participating in investigations and inspections, and training.

JOSH committee members should be chosen by their respective unions. However, if no one volunteers then employers have the ability, by law, to appoint members of their choosing to fill vacancies. This means that your employer can hand pick OHS committee members if no union members step forwards. This is why it is so important for HSA members like you to step forward and join their OHS committees.

The time commitment for OHS work, whether a steward or JOSH rep, varies by jobsite. All time for the work of JOSH is employer-paid work time. JOSH reps attend the monthly OSH committee meeting, which varies in length from 1 to 3 hours. Committee members are also provided time to prepare for meetings and for follow up. People serving on committees are also expected and required to participate in incident investigations, and in safety inspections and risk assessments. The amount of time for this will vary by job site, and higher-risk environments will require more time.

If you are interested in becoming an OHS Steward or serving on your JOSH committee, please either speak to your chief steward or email [ohssupport@hsabc.org](mailto:ohssupport@hsabc.org) for more information.





# HEALTH SCIENCES ASSOCIATION

## The union delivering modern health care

HSA's Board of Directors is elected by members to run HSA between annual conventions. Members should feel free to contact them with any concerns.

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We welcome submissions to *The Report* from HSA members. See our submission guidelines online at [www.hsabc.org/submissions](http://www.hsabc.org/submissions).

*The Report* magazine is produced on the unceded homelands of the Qayqayt First Nation and printed in Richmond, BC, on the unceded territories of the Kwantlen, Tsawwassen, Stó:lō, Stz'uminus, and Musqueam peoples. Unceded means that Aboriginal title to this land has never been surrendered or relinquished.

HSA recognizes the intersections between public health care and social services and Indigenous rights, noting that structural violence against Indigenous peoples in Canada, including historic and ongoing colonialism, impacts Indigenous peoples' equal right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, the right to access, without discrimination, all social and health services, and the right to their traditional medicines and to maintain their health practices (as outlined in Article 24, United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples).



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