

## ufcwnews



### 247 Builds on the International Convention Values

The UFCW 9th Regular Convention in 2023 concluded with a renewed focus on UFCW's unity and values across North America. International Conventions occur every 5 years with all UFCW Locals in North America meeting to set the agenda and direction for the next 5 years.

Public-facing workers, including UFCW members, were front and center at this convention and UFCW pledged to focus our energy to continue to put workers first. UFCW Canada Local Unions further advocated for safe working environments, emphasizing the importance of treating everyone with respect and dignity on the job.

In the aftermath of the COVID-19 epidemic, it is evident that a new normal has emerged for our frontline members. We strongly believe that more efforts are needed to reignite member activism, keep workers at the forefront and foster greater solidarity.

Your union has built upon the commitment and vision outlined during the International Convention. As part of our local effort to support for Convention priorities, UFCW 247 has initiated two member programs.

To strengthen our union and ensure a vibrant and inclusive future, UFCW 247 has launched an Engagement Committee Member recruitment drive. Active members are encouraged to share their voices and unique energy to help guide the direction of the union.

Emails and information were shared on Union Bulletin Boards to invite interested members to join the UFCW Local 247 Engagement Committee. The committee aims to foster a more vibrant and connected community that we can all take pride in. Having an inclusive and empowered Local is the first step in nurturing strong relationships within our union and encouraging volunteer participation in various activities and events.

To address customer violence and abuse in retail, the union has initiated a **"Not Part of Our Job Campaign"**. We firmly assert that tolerating customer violence and abuse is not part of any retail worker's job description.

This campaign has kicked off with leaflet cards containing key information on how members should handle customer violence situations. Additionally, posters have been placed on Union Bulletin Boards, and a new online reporting tool has been introduced. Shop Stewards were invited to a webinar to enhance their ability to support members in these situations, become familiar with available reporting tools and resources, and understand our initiatives to amplify the voices of retail members.

For more information, please visit our website at [www.ufcw247.com/health-safety](http://www.ufcw247.com/health-safety).

### Connect with Telephone Town Hall meetings!



UFCW Local 247 has members living in every corner of B.C., and beyond. To better connect our widespread membership with the latest news and information from the union, we use Telephone Town Hall calls about 4 times per year.

**The next Telephone Town Hall is on May 30<sup>th</sup> 2024.**

If we have your current phone number, we'll call you and all you have to do is answer your phone. You can also dial in by calling **1.877.229.8493**, with ID **#116389** and following the prompts.

### this issue

- p2 Solidarity Matters
- p2 UFCW 247 Supports Neuro Diversity in Kelowna
- p3 Engaging Workplace Leaders
- p4 Thompson River University Meat Cutting Program
- p5 BDM Scholarship Winner
- p5 Iorio Scholarships & Eddy Education Grants
- p6 National Day of Mourning
- p6 Shoe Memorial
- p7 Your Union Benefits at Work
- p7 Pride - Call For Volunteers
- p8 Endless Savings & More (ESM)
- p8 webCampus





# solidarity matters

## Chilliwack Community Stronger Than Ever

Ethan Fleming was born on January 30<sup>th</sup> 2006. He was diagnosed with Cancer in Grade 1 and sadly he passed away after a courageous battle on September 9<sup>th</sup> 2022.

Long term member Tanna Fleming has kept the memory of her son alive in many different ways, one way was being involved with the Hearts of Gold Gala. Tanna and her husband Walter have now started the first annual plant sale, all proceeds go to a scholarship in Ethan's memory.

Tanna has been a proud union member for 23 years. She is grateful for the support she received from

UFCW 247, from a pub night to help with the cost of her son's celebration of life ceremony, and now with the Hearts of Gold Gala where UFCW 247 helped with Sponsorship of a Casino table to help raise money for such an important cause.

Back for a second year, the Hearts of Gold Gala fundraiser for childhood cancer research is sure to be a night to remember!

Cancer is the #1 cause of death in children, more than all other diseases combined! Yet only 5% of all cancer funding is directed to childhood cancers. This needs to

change and with your help it can! Proceeds from the gala will go to support the Michael Cuccione Research program at BC Children's Hospital, Children's Cancer Therapy Development Institute and UCLA's Pediatric Sarcoma Research Program.

**Changing the face of childhood cancer!**

Great work Chilliwack.

## UFCW 247 Supports Neuro Diversity in Kelowna

In June 2014, the Autism Okanagan Association, a not-for-profit organization, was officially established. Union Representative Elisca Long is a long-time supporter of this organization and along with her spouse Trevor and their family have enjoyed volunteering and supporting neurodiverse members of their community.

The Autism Okanagan Association provides a variety of programs for everyone to get involved in. From Lego Club, Adult and Youth Hockey Programs, or YAP (Youth and Adult Program) Clubs. One featured program is the Kelowna WildCats Special Hockey Program, designed for children and youth aged 5-15 with autism and other developmental disabilities. This program provides the opportunity to play hockey and develop fitness, coordination, and social skills. For older youth and adults aged 16 and above, they have the Kelowna Wild Special Hockey Program, which offers a similar opportunity to play hockey and develop skills.

Other community events include Sensitive Santa, a sensory-friendly visit with Santa every December. Ernie Els #GameON Autism® Golf Program, AOK Charity Golf Classic, Mom's Night Out, Digital Arts Club and a

Drawing Club where members can gather, enjoy hand drawing, and learn from professional artists.

As part of her years-long community spirit, Elisca has come to know many of the program participants as some become UFCW members working in the community.

"I am thankful to all employers who recognize the value of neurodiverse individuals and provide them with opportunities to thrive in the workplace" said Elisca Long. "Your inclusive hiring practices not only benefit these individuals but also enrich your teams and contribute to a more diverse and innovative workforce. Your commitment to diversity and inclusion is truly commendable."

We want to recognize our UFCW members who also participated in this year's Special Olympics held in Calgary this February. Special acknowledgment to all participants who earned medals at this year's Special Olympics. Your dedication, sportsmanship, and achievements inspire us all.

For 50 years, Special Olympics Canada has enriched the lives of Canadians with an intellectual disability - of all ages and skill levels - through the transformative power of sport.

This community within a community exemplifies the spirit of engagement.

Pictured below with Union Representative Elisca Long is 247 member Kalen Von Unruh who received a bronze medal in cross country skiing. Kalen volunteers for the Wildcat Hockey and is an athlete with the Wild and numerous Special Olympic events.





# Engaging Workplace Leaders

## Leaders in your workplace

A Shop steward is one of your coworkers who has received specialized UFCW 247 education and has been tasked with providing a voice and visibility for your union in your workplace. They are volunteers who give confidential support to other union members, and they are vital to building a strong union.

## Enforcing the collective agreement

Shop stewards know the collective agreement AND they know your workplace well. Plus, they're always in touch with your union staff representative on things happening at your workplace. If something seems strange about how you're being treated at work, check in with your Shop steward.

## Shop stewards have your back

Having a steward means knowing that someone at work has your back. If you are ever called into a discipline meeting, we recommend you request the presence of a Shop steward.

## A resource for union information

A steward is usually aware of what is going on elsewhere in your union, including resources and opportunities you might find helpful. Even if you have a question that your steward can't answer, they should be able to point you in the right direction.

## Become a steward!

Remember stewards are workers just like you!

In fact, any UFCW 247 member can take the courses that are required to become a steward.





# Thompson River University Meat Cutting Program

Bruce Jackson began his career as a meatcutter in 1988 and eventually became a journeyman at Safeway, dedicating 18 years to the company. During his tenure, he served in various roles, including as a float staff member. Bruce also played a significant role in supporting the Thompson River Meat Cutting Program for 18 years, contributing to its development and the creation of its manual. Known for his vocal leadership and passion for meat cutting, Bruce was a proud member of Local 2000 before it merged with Local 777 to form Local 247, where he became a Union Representative. In this role, Bruce assisted the local in various capacities, representing different bargaining units. In addition to his union responsibilities, Bruce maintained his passion for meat cutting and was a strong advocate for the TRU Meat Cutting Program. He has helped numerous members in their journey to become meat cutters and takes great pride in their accomplishments. A photo on the right shows Bruce with two recent graduates, Nellie and Wagner.

"I am proud to be a journeyman, and it has been a rewarding experience and career," said Bruce. "It brings me so much joy to see the next generation learn this tradecraft and progress onward." He added.

After 18 years, Bruce has decided that it is time to retire and pursue other passions. We wish to thank Bruce for his years of service and we also wish him the best in his well-deserved retirement.

The TRU Meat Cutting Program will continue.

Alicia Whitehead is a meat cutter with Safeway and serves as a Shop steward and Vice-President for Local 247. She will continue 247's support of the TRU Meat Cutting Program and bring her own passion and energy.

Alicia Whitehead began her journey at Safeway in 2014, starting in the deli department and also working as a relief seafood and meat wrapper.

While working in the department, they were supported by fellow Union members to join a meat cutting program they had heard about. Through the Union, they joined the TRU program for 9 months in 2017, with the assistance of Union Representative Bruce Jackson.

At that time, there were 2 or 3 other 247 Safeway members participating in the program. Alicia found the program amazing, learning a lot in a super positive atmosphere. Reflecting on their journey to obtain their apprenticeship certificate, they worked their hours and joined the float staff to learn from different meat cutters, eventually becoming an assistant meat manager at a store. They currently work as a float staff as they stepped down to assist the union with negotiations.

Alicia is proud to assist their 247 union with the TRU Program, stating, "This is a great skilled trade with skills that can be used in your life with whatever you choose to do."

The TRU program consists of 13 courses, many of which include both theory and practical components.

About halfway through the program, there are seminars on public relations, customer contact, and advertising. Visits to local meat cutting operations are conducted early in the program to familiarize students with the industry. Other field trips may include visits to slaughterhouse operations and/or chicken processing plants.

Starting at about the midpoint of the program, students undertake two three-week practical work experiences to gain experience in an industry setting.

As part of their community engagement and advocacy for their trade, Alicia joined the Dream It Be It Girls Conference 2024 at Kwantlen Polytechnic University in Surrey. This conference is a unique opportunity for young women, transgender, and non-binary youth aged 15 - 19 to explore their dreams and discover their potential. Alicia is proud to represent UFCW 247 as a meat cutter.





## BDM Scholarship Winner

UFCW 247 member Sai Tejaswini Vemuganti is one of the latest recipients of the UFCW Canada - BDM Scholarship award.

A UFCW 247 member at Metrotown Superstore, Vemuganti is currently in her second year of an MBA program at University Canada West in Vancouver. She aspires to enter the banking and finance sector after graduation.

"As a full-time student, I have been facing financial challenges due to the skyrocketing costs of living in the city," says Vemuganti. "Thanks to the BDM scholarship, I can finally sign up for the financial services certification and enhance my knowledge. I am extremely grateful for being selected and for getting an opportunity to advance my career!"



BDM scholarship winner Sai Tejaswini Vemuganti receives her scholarship cheque from UFCW 247 rep Tima Dickerson

## Iorio Scholarships & Eddy Education Grants

The Iorio Scholarships and Eddy Education Grants are named in honor of two influential leaders at the UFCW 247 Training Centre. Denyse Iorio and Nolan Eddy were pivotal in the success of various government-funded programs over 25 years. These programs, such as 45+, Women in Trades, T.R.A.D.E.S, Skills Link Hospitality, Professional Cook, G.V.U.A.S, and Discovery to Apprenticeship, benefited numerous participants.

Denyse retired in 2016 and passed away in 2020, while Nolan started his retirement in 2021. The scholarships and grants aim to continue their legacy by supporting education and training for UFCW 247 members and their dependents.

UFCW 247 is dedicated to awarding up to ten \$1,500 scholarships annually to active members or their eligible dependents for full-time enrollment. Additionally, up to eight \$750 education grants are available for part-time continuing studies or academic upgrading of a part-time nature for members (excluding dependents) starting or continuing their education. Online application forms for these opportunities will be available on July 1, 2024.

Congratulations to all the 2023 Iorio Scholarship and Eddy Grant recipients. The union wishes them success in their future educational endeavors.







## Shoe Memorial

Each year on December 6, the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women, the Shoe Memorial honours the memory of women killed by violence by placing a set of shoes for each victim on the steps of the Vancouver Art Gallery, with their names displayed.

The 21<sup>st</sup> annual Shoe Memorial in Vancouver took place on Wednesday, December 6, 2023, at the Vancouver Art Gallery (Robson Side).

The event ran from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm, with guest speakers.

Each year, all the shoes gathered for the memorial are donated to agencies and organizations that directly assist women in need.

Tima Dickerson, Johnny Khakh, Dawn Stevenson, Sandra Peters, Cathy Maw, Sinead Wilson, and Mike Toal helped put out shoes and hand out informational leaflets about the event.

We are grateful to our volunteers who spent many hours gathering shoes, setting up the memorial and speaking with the community.



April 28

## National Day of Mourning

The National Day of Mourning in Canada is observed on April 28th each year to remember and honour workers who have been killed, injured, or suffered illness due to workplace-related hazards and incidents. It's a day to reflect on the importance of workplace safety and to renew commitments to preventing future tragedies.

Reflecting on the National Day of Mourning can be important for several reasons. As workers our lives may have been touched by someone who has been killed, injured, or suffered illness due to workplace incidents.

It's a day to pay tribute to those who have lost their lives or been injured in the workplace. Reflecting on their sacrifices can help us appreciate the importance of workplace safety.

Throughout 2023, WorkSafeBC says there have been 175 workers who lost their lives while doing their jobs.

Taking this moment, please pause and have a discussion with someone close to you to raise awareness about workplace safety issues and better practices.

Observing the National Day of Mourning can also be a way to show solidarity with those who have been affected by workplace accidents and most importantly begin that discussion on prevention and prioritizing safety.

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## WCB Advocacy

Have you been injured on the job?

If you have filed a claim and would like to appeal the Workers Compensation Board's (WCB) decision, your union may be able to advocate for you.

Members who suffered a workplace injury and have had their claim denied are able to seek independent legal counsel, utilize the WCB workers advisers' office, and speak with their union.

As part of our advocacy for worker's rights, we may be able to help you navigate the claims process, provide guidance on how to present your case effectively and maximize your chances of a successful outcome.

Dealing with a work-related injury or illness can be stressful. An advocate can help you navigate the appeals process.

"I take pride in assisting our members with their WCB appeals," said WCB advocate Eric Seto. "While I wish we could win every case, our goal is to ensure that members receive the benefits they need and deserve after a work-related injury or illness."



# Your Union Benefits at Work

Prudent Benefits Administrative Services (PBAS) has advised your Union that the new member portal called DrawBridge intended to improve member access to their benefits has successfully launched to eligible members at Loblaws Superstore, DC, and Extra Foods.

As many members may be aware, the UFCW 247 Benefit Trust Fund is a health and welfare fund that provides benefits to eligible union members and their dependents. The Benefit Trust Fund is one of the ways in which the UFCW supports its members by providing various benefits, such as dental care, vision care, death benefit, and other wellness-related benefits.

These benefits are funded through contributions made by employers as part of their collective bargaining agreements with the UFCW. The trust fund is administered by a board of trustees, which includes both labour union representatives and employer representatives. Trustees from the Union and the Company have had ongoing discussions with PBAS on service improvements. Discussions on improving access and shortening claims processing times were areas that the Trustees felt needed change. Adding this portal will make the claims process much easier for many members.

The new member portal will allow members to:

- Download your benefit card
- Submit claims online
- Track reimbursements
- Add eligible dependants
- Register for direct deposit

Registration is optional however we strongly encourage plan members to take advantage of the service enhancement.

Mail in and email submissions will still be accepted and processed.

If you have any questions regarding your benefits, please contact the Administrator at 1-800-663-7977 or [247benefits@pbas.ca](mailto:247benefits@pbas.ca).

In addition, we are also pleased to announce a Plan Enhancement.

The Trustees of the 247 Benefit Trust Fund have approved a plan enhancement regarding eligible pharmacies.

Members can now receive reimbursement at 100% of the cost of prescriptions up to the yearly maximum of \$2000.00.

The plan will now process prescription drugs at 100% up to the yearly maximum at all Loblaw and affiliated pharmacies, including Extra Foods, YIG, No Frills, Loblaws, Superstore, Loblaw City Market, and Shoppers Drug Mart.

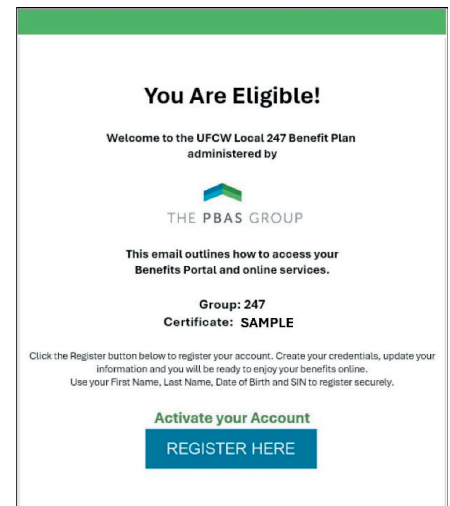
This enhancement provides members with the added convenience of accessing their prescriptions at more pharmacies.

Remember, these benefits are hard fought for our members by your Union. We encourage you to register and utilize your benefits.

Scan this QR code, or visit [ufcw247.drawbridge.ca](http://ufcw247.drawbridge.ca), to Check out your new Member Portal, and complete the registration.



Plan Members may be receiving registration emails that will look like this:



# Pride – Call for Volunteers

Your Union proudly supports our LGBTQ+ members and actively participates in events that promote inclusivity and awareness. We have been part of Surrey Pride's FESTIVAL ON THE PLAZA and the renowned Vancouver Pride Parade, both significant celebrations of the LGBTQ+ community.

This year, Surrey Pride will once again take place at the Civic Plaza in front of City Hall on June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024. We are excited to announce that we will be hosting a booth at the event to demonstrate our ongoing support. Additionally, the Vancouver Pride Parade is scheduled for August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

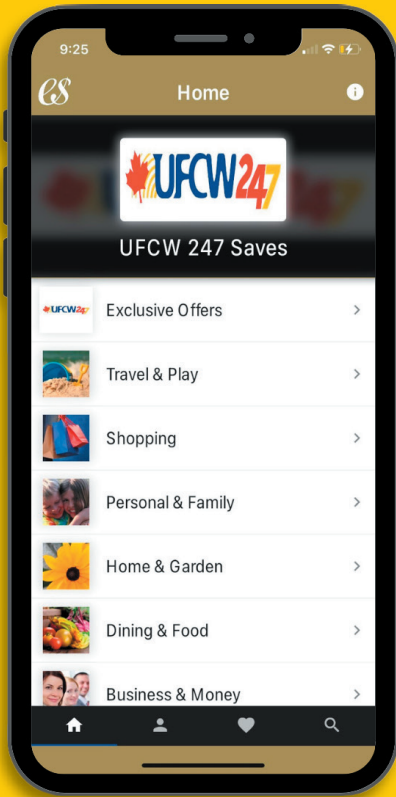
We understand the importance of organizing these events to allow our members to participate and connect with each other. Since initiating our

engagement drive, we have received overwheming feedback from members expressing their desire to participate and engage more actively. This feedback has highlighted the need for better-organized opportunities for participation.

Supporting these events is not without its challenges, which is why we rely on your support to continue our solidarity efforts. We are committed to participating in Pride 2024, and we invite you to join us by walking in the parade or assisting at our volunteer booth. If you're interested, please email us at [ufcw@ufcw247.com](mailto:ufcw@ufcw247.com).

Furthermore, if you would like to invite us to support and join you at your workplace event or activity, please contact us to explore how we can show solidarity in your workplace. Together, we can continue to promote inclusivity and support the LGBTQ+ community.





## Endless Savings & More (ESM): Discounts on your smart phone for UFCW 247 Members

Download a UFCW 247 version of the Endless Savings & More App to save on everyday purchases from hundreds of businesses including national chain retailers, service and travel providers. Powered by Endless Savings & More (ESM), this program is available to UFCW 247 members and their families.

### How It Works

- Install the UFCW 247 version of the ESM App on your smart phone
- GPS automatically shows merchants and savings that are closest to your current location
- Tap on a merchant to view offers & tap on an offer for redemption details

- You typically show the offer on your smart phone at payment in physical locations or enter a code for online purchases

### Getting Started

- Go to your app store (Google or Apple) on your smart phone
- Search for: ESM or Endless Savings & More
- During registration you will be asked for an "organization code": Your code is: **ufcw247**
- Allow location services. ESM uses "locations services" or GPS to automatically show you offers that are closest to your current location first

### How to Save Hundreds

- Check out the UFCW 247 "Exclusive Offers" and save hundreds on your smart phone & plan from Rogers. UFCW 247 "Exclusive Offers" always appear first when you tap the ESM App
- Check out the "Travel and Play" category on the ESM App to save hundreds on your next travel
- When in the mall or your shopping district, always "Tap the ESM App" to save additional hundreds per year



## webCampus: Free online courses for members and their families!

webCampus is UFCW Canada's online learning program that allows UFCW Canada members and their family members to access their favourite online courses - free of charge - on all tablets, smart phones, laptops, desktops, and Apple computers and devices, meaning participants can complete courses whenever and wherever they want.

webCampus courses focus on everything from personal development to health and safety to computer skills, and are available to all UFCW Canada members and family members at no cost.

To learn more about webCampusPLUS, please go to [ufcw.ca](http://ufcw.ca), and follow the webCampus links.



## Connect with your Union:

**Call:** 604.535.8329 or  
1.888.361.UFCW (8329)

**Email:** [ufcw@ufcw247.com](mailto:ufcw@ufcw247.com)

**Visit:** [www.ufcw247.com](http://www.ufcw247.com)

**Social:** @ufcw247



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