

Over the past year, the SFL Executive Council has met four times:

- December 13, 2021 – Zoom
- March 22, 2022 - Zoom
- September 26, 2022 - Zoom
- October 25, 2022 - Queensbury Convention Centre, Regina

### **New Affiliates – 2021/202**

- United Steelworkers Local 2014
- Unite Here Local 41

### **SFL Strike/Lockout Appeals – 2020/2021**

Unite Here Local 41 members at the Super 8 Motel in Moose Jaw were locked out by their employer in March of 2022 after members refused proposed concessions. The SFL supported members with a \$500 donation and a rally on the picket line on June 24.

### **SFL Campaigns and Political Action**

2021 and 2022 have been dominated by issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic and the government's failure to protect workers from getting sick, as well as workers struggling to make ends meet due to skyrocketing inflation. The following are campaigns, rallies, events and political actions that the SFL organized in 2021 and 2022.

#### **Demand Health Minister Merriman Resign**

In fall of 2021, the SFL launched a campaign and petition calling on Health Minister Paul Merriman to resign for his disastrous handling of the COVID-19 pandemic after the virus got out of control again and resulted in a fifth wave. The petition was circulated online and through a targeted text message campaign which resulted in thousands of signatures all across the province.

#### **Sask. Party Convention Intervention**

The SFL held a rally at TCU Place in Saskatoon during the Sask. Party's convention. Workers from SFL affiliates joined to demand the Health Minister's resignation and that the government take immediate action to protect workers from COVID-19.

## **Speak up for Safety Campaign**

The SFL launched “Speak up for Safety”- a campaign to demand that the government take measures to keep workers safe at work, including:

- Ensuring proper PPE for all workers
- Legislating 10 days of paid sick leave for all workers
- Ensure safe staffing levels in hospitals, schools, and public services.

The campaign had a combination of online actions and in-person demonstrations. Workers gathered in front of Sask. Party MLA offices in Regina and Saskatoon in February and March to demand action, both events received media coverage in all major outlets. The SFL also used the online tools on our website to allow people to send form letters to their MLA asking them to speak up for the safety of workers and take action. We also used a new tool that allowed workers to directly call their MLA and leave them a message demanding action.

## **Send Moe a Message Rally**

The SFL held a rally in front of the government cabinet office in Saskatoon on August 19 during the government’s cabinet meeting to demand the government take action on a number of their failures, including not addressing inflation, making life harder for workers by raising their taxes and utilities, and the critical staffing crisis in health care that has overwhelmed hospitals and led to hospital closures across the province.

## **Campaign for Inflation Relief**

In July, the SFL launched a campaign calling on the government to provide immediate relief for workers hit hard by inflation, high fuel prices, and the skyrocketing cost of living. The SFL called on the government to:

- Immediate increase the minimum wage to \$15 an hour and come up with a plan to introduce a living wage,
- Scrap planned tax hikes and proposed utility rate hikes
- Tax profits from companies experiencing record revenues from high resource prices and provide rebates to Saskatchewan people.

The SFL launched a petition for workers to sign on to which was heavily circulated across the province throughout the summer and signed on to by thousands of workers.

## **Make September 30 a Provincial Holiday**

In September, the SFL renewed its campaign to call on the provincial government to make September 30, the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, a statutory holiday for all workers in the province. A petition was launched on the SFL website in September and gathered over 600 signatures in a matter of days. We will continue to push the government to make September 30 a holiday so that all workers have the opportunity to use the day to learn, quietly reflect, or participate in reconciliation events in their communities.

## **Fight for \$15 Victory**

After a years-long campaign, the SFL was pleased that the provincial government finally introduced a plan to raise the minimum wage to \$15 an hour after years of small, almost meaningless increases. This was a big win for workers, and the direct result of years of hard work from the SFL and affiliates in campaigning for a higher minimum wage. However, the plan to raise the minimum wage sees workers having to wait until 2024 until the minimum wage officially reaches \$15 an hour. This year's increase from \$11.90 to \$13 an hour is the largest increase for workers in years, but still leaves Saskatchewan with the lowest minimum wage in the country. The increase has also been eaten away by inflation and the rising cost of living. The SFL will continue to push for an immediate increase to \$15 an hour, with a plan to come up with a living wage for workers in the province.

## **Other Campaigns and Actions**

### **Paid Sick Leave**

The SFL continued its campaign in 2022 for the provincial government to provide paid sick leave for all workers. We supported NDP MLA Jennifer Bowe's Private Members' Bill that would have ensured all workers receive 10 days of paid sick leave per year. The bill was voted on in June on the last day of the legislative session, and was voted down after every Sask. Party MLA voted against it. The SFL will continue to push for paid sick leave so that no worker has to choose between going to work sick or putting food on the table.

### **Calling on Provincial Government to Protect vital Frontline Services**

The SFL joined health care affiliates and the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation in early 2022 to call on the government to protect frontline services in health care and education by implementing recommendations made by health experts in order to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and prevent our public services from once again becoming overwhelmed.

### **SFL Diversity Campaign**

Following a resolution at the last convention, the SFL worked with its committees on a diversity campaign to better recognize, highlight and acknowledge the diversity of Saskatchewan workers. The campaign is designed to be ongoing, and actions that the SFL will be taking as part of the campaign include:

#### ***Diversity Recognized in the Labour Reporter***

The SFL will dedicate space in each quarterly issue of Labour Reporter to promote the diversity campaign, highlight diversity issues, and promote upcoming days/months of recognition.

#### ***SFL recognition of days/months on social media***

The SFL will create a listing of days and months of recognition dedicated to diversity and ensure that we are promoting and highlighting information on our social media during those times.

### ***SFL Calendar highlighting days/months of recognition***

The SFL will create and print a 12-month calendar that highlights diverse workers, as well as special days and months of recognition dedicated to diversity. Copies of the calendar will be distributed to member affiliates.

### ***Updated SFL Committee Brochures***

The SFL will create and develop updated brochures for diversity committees to share at events, with affiliates, and locals, to encourage more workers to get involved with the SFL and SFL diversity committees.

### ***SFL Support for events recognizing diversity/diversity issues***

The SFL, at the request of committees, will support and share information with affiliates for events in our communities that recognize and celebrate diversity, and diverse workers. Requests for financial support of events, or for events hosted by committees, will be made through committee chairs to the SFL President for consideration.

### ***Diversity recognized at SFL Convention***

The SFL will dedicate space at our annual convention to discuss and celebrate diversity and diverse workers, and educate workers on the issues diverse workers face and how all workers can be allies to end racism and discrimination in their workplaces and communities. This year, Zarqa Nawaz will be our keynote speaker, discussing diversity at work.

### ***SFL biennial Equity Conference***

The SFL will continue to host a biennial equity conference dedicated to celebrating diversity, diverse workers, and educating members on issues faced by diverse workers, and how to be an ally in the workplace to support diversity.

### ***Highlighting diverse workers***

The SFL, with the help of committees, will arrange to have photos taken of diverse workers to use throughout the campaign in any materials created and on social media.

## **Childcare**

The SFL continues to work closely with the advocacy group Childcare Now, following the provincial/federal government agreement to move to affordable, \$10 a day child care. The SFL continues to work to ensure that the province is meeting its commitment to create child care spaces, and that child care workers are treated fairly, paid fair wages, and have the opportunity to join a union.

## **50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Occupational Health and Safety Legislation**

The SFL is marking the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the passing of Occupational Health and Safety Legislation in the province. This groundbreaking legislation paved the way for many jurisdictions in North America and has led to safer workplaces everywhere. The recognition of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary is being celebrated with:

- Special Edition of the Labour Reporter, released in June
- Commemorative Video, shown at Convention

- Panel discussion at convention
- A special course on the history of OH&S in Saskatchewan was taught at the Occupational Health and Safety Conference in September
- Commemorative T-shirts available for purchase at convention

### **Saskatoon Meewasin Byelection**

The SFL worked hard to elect NDP candidate and CUPE Member Nathaniel Teed to the legislature during the byelection campaign to fill former NDP Leader Ryan Meili's seat in Saskatoon Meewasin. The SFL organized a labour canvass and attended several organized canvasses throughout the campaign. Nathaniel was successful in the election, receiving 57% of the vote. Nathaniel is the first out gay MLA in the legislature and will be a strong voice for working people.

### **SFL Labour Liaison Committee**

Following the 2020 provincial election, the SFL has been working with Labour Critic and now leader Carla Beck, and Labour Critic Jennifer Bowes through an SFL/NDP Labour Liaison Committee. This committee includes representatives from SFL Executive Council, affiliate members and other workers. The goal of this committee is to foster better communication and consultation between the NDP and labour, and make sure that labour's voice is being heard, concerns are being addressed, and priorities are aligned. The committee has met twice in the past year, and continues to work together,

### **Expanding Online Presence of the SFL**

The pandemic has made us rely more heavily on social media and digital communication tools to connect with workers. The SFL has continued to grow its presence on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Our new website launched in the fall of 2022 that has allowed us to further our online engagement through a number of new tools such as online petitions and online letter-writing campaigns. These online tools have allowed us to continue to grow our online database of workers in the province that was started with our "Putting Workers First" campaign launched in advance of the 2020 provincial election. When we begin our work to engage with workers in our next labour issues campaign for the 2024 election, we will have a database with thousands of identified supporters that we can reach out to as we work to elect a worker-friendly government.

### **Labour Reporter**

The SFL Labour Reporter was published and distributed to affiliates in December, March, June, and September. The Labour Reporter is also available in an online format on the SFL website.

### **Media Releases**

The SFL has commented in the media on issues related to workers dozens of times over the past year and continues to receive media requests on a weekly basis. The SFL distributed 29 news releases and statements to media outlets across the province over the past year.

## Union Education Initiatives

The SFL organized the following education events and initiatives in 2021-22:

1. SFL All Committees Meeting, February 15, 2022 - Virtual
2. Black History Month Screening of “Black Boys” Film, February 15, 2022 - Virtual
3. Film Screening of “ nîpawistamâsowin: We Will Stand Up” February 16, 2022 - Virtual
4. SFL Equity Conference - February 16, 2022, Regina
5. Co-hosted the SFL/CLC Spring School, May 2-6, 2022, Regina
6. Hosted Prairie School for Union Women, June 13-16, 2022, Saskatoon
7. 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual SFL Summer Camp, August 5-11, 2022, Shekinah Retreat Centre
8. Annual SFL OH&S Conference, September 14-16, 2022, Regina
9. 66<sup>th</sup> Annual SFL Convention, October 26 - 28, 2022, Regina

Submitted by Eric Bell  
SFL Strategic Advisor

## SFL Finance and Structure Committee

Over the past year, the SFL Finance and Structure Committee has met four times:

- December 9, 2021 - Zoom
- March 10, 2022 - Zoom
- September 8, 2022 - Zoom
- October 25, 2022 - Queensbury Convention Centre, Regina

### Terms of Reference

To review and make recommendations to the SFL Executive Council regarding the budget, financial statements, audits, policies, and structure of the Federation of Labour.

### Summary of Activities

The SFL Finance and Structure Committee is a group of incredibly talented, knowledgeable, and experienced union leaders – it has been a pleasure working with each of them. Collectively, we put our minds to reforming a number of practices at the Federation of Labour to ensure the SFL remains effective, accountable, responsive, and financially viable long into the future.

This committee ensures best practices and research-based recommendations are engrained into decision-making at the Federation of Labour – ensuring the SFL Executive Council has the information they need to approve recommendations that benefit all members and affiliates of the federation.

In solidarity,  
Kent Peterson, Chair  
SFL Finance and Structure Committee

## 2022 SFL Summer Camp

The SFL Summer Camp kicked off its 32<sup>nd</sup> year resuming its stay at Shekinah Retreat Centre. This year's camp was guided by 19 staff, including two Camp Directors, a Recreation Director, four Youth Activity Coordinators (YACs), two nurses, eight counselors and two “Kitchen Magicians”. The camp kicked off on August 5, 2022, with 29 total campers. Of the 29 registered campers, 27 were new to SFL Camp, while the remaining 2 campers joined us after 2 years of pause.

Camp 2022 was held at Shekinah Retreat Centre and started with the traditional family BBQ and the opening ceremonies of Camp. When it was time for families to say goodbye to campers, the group split into 4 locals. The Campers got real close with the people in their local as they were partnered up for the remainder of camp. To get camp running, Campers created a “social contract” that identified some rules to ensure camp remained a fun, safe and respectful space for the week.

Saturday morning we began with a presentation on collective action. What is it? How does it work? And why is it important? This year we tried a new approach of collective bargaining. Instead of having the Campers come up with and lobby for their rules the first day, we decided to spread out the bargaining over the week of camp, allowing Campers to practice and participate in actual social change. This included protests, posters, discussions and even utilizing the “media”. Campers watched videos and brainstormed with their locals. We continued this session into the afternoon. For the remainder of the day we had some fun in the sun playing crab soccer, chicken and giant Yahtzee. We ended the night with our tradition of Talking Stick. This Talking Stick was a first for many.

On Sunday morning, we started with a presentation on Ready For Work. This is intended to share information with campers ready to enter the workforce and learn about Occupational Health and Safety and Labour Standards. The afternoon had all sorts of fun Wet and Wild activities like water gun graffiti wall and of course a nice “float like a goat” down the river.

Monday morning's session was a Personal Land Acknowledgement. In this session Campers began by sharing their own personal experiences and connections to land. This was followed by a grounding meditation and discussion that took place outside in their locals. Campers sat in a circle and used their senses (smell, hearing, feeling) to ground themselves to land they were on at that moment. The afternoon consisted of more wet and wild fun and of course another “float like a goat”.

On Tuesday Campers and Staff had the amazing opportunity to take a field trip to Wanuskewin Heritage Museum and spend most of the day out there. Campers were in two separate sessions simultaneously. The first session was called Tipi Teachings and Campers got to help build a Tipi. While also learning about the processes we learned as what each pole represents to the Indigenous people. The other session was a Step Back in Time Walk where Campers went on a hike around the grounds of Wanuskewin and learned all about buffalo, plants and the land itself. There was a great music performance at lunch where Campers enjoyed a bison or veggie burger as they listened to the beautiful fiddler as he played music from across the provinces. When returning to camp we had a fantabulous Camp Carnival. .

On our last day at camp, we began our morning session on Organizing for Social Change. Campers got to take all the information they learned over the week and create something with it. There were Campers making songs, collages, Land Acknowledgements and even decorating their very own planters. We of course ended the night with an SFL Camp tradition The Dance. This year's dance was space themed, and everyone played the part.

Throughout the camp our Recreation Director and Youth Activity Coordinators ran an abundance of fun activities that included early morning hikes on the hiking trails and other activities, such as zip lining, rock climbing, and initiative tasks that our campers and staff enjoyed in the evenings. One of our counselors and his kids who were Campers this year did a very informative presentation on mother languages.

Our two amazing chefs spent countless hours feeding us and keeping the Camp going. Campers had amazing meals this year.

We owe the success of SFL Camp to affiliate donations and other partnerships. Thank you to those who sponsored youth to attend camp, covered wages of incredible staff to spend a week at camp and those who donated money to help. Every donation goes a long way. You have all helped build a community of confident, respectful, and strong young leaders in the labour movement. We thank you for all your support for this year's Camp and look forward to an amazing camp next year.

Solidarity Forever.

### ***HUGE THANK YOU to all Camp Staff and their Organizations***

- Camp Directors – Barb Byers (volunteer) and Steve Torgerson (GSU)
- Rec Director – Mackenzie Sawchyn
- YACs – Mercedes Phillips, Memphis Parenteau, Brooke Pickering, Martha Haqmed
- Counselors – Kent Peterson (SFL), Jessica Boyer (SFL), Heather Szeponski (volunteer), Nathan Hayes-Fry (volunteer), Brendon Hanson, Debashish Bhowmik (SGEU), Tracy Webb (SGEU), Deena Kapacila (volunteer)
- Nursing Staff – Justin Dzialo (SUN), Shelby Luchsinger (SUN)
- Kitchen Magicians – Barb Cape (volunteer), Judy Henley (volunteer)

### ***Special Thanks to our Swag Donations***

- SGEU
- PSAC
- UFCW 1400
- UFCW 649
- SASK POLYTECH
- WDLC
- WCB
- COPE 397
- USW 5980

### ***Funds Contributed for 2022***

- RWDSU Convention \$630
- CUPE Sask Convention \$700
- Mark Hancock \$100

### ***Camper Sponsorships for 2022***

- RWDSU 544
- RWDSU S955
- SGEU
- CUPE 600

Submitted by Barb Byers  
SFL Camp Director

## **Prairie School for Union Women (PSUW)**

The PSUW celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> year with trade union women from across the Prairies and beyond. The school is an intensive four days of learning and sharing in a supportive environment. The goals of the school are to develop women's personal and leadership skills and to build solidarity among women workers. The school provides on-site childcare and is committed to child-friendly attitudes. This year we were able to offer virtual courses as well as in person workshops. We also had to change locations due to the pandemic and accessibility issues from our current location. The Bessborough Hotel in Saskatoon was a beautiful setting for our school this year.

This year was another extremely successful and progressive school for women after having to miss a year and then hold only virtual workshops in 2021. The school featured seven different courses to choose from, all designed with an equity lens, and facilitated by activists from across the country. We were able to offer four in person workshops, Igniting the Spark, Popular Education – level one, Transforming Conflict into Union Activism and Making Land Acknowledgments Matter. Along with three virtual workshops Building Strong and Inclusive Locals That Prioritize Human Rights, and Women's Health and Safety in the Workplace. All courses were very well attended and received.

The school continues to offer a scholarship program funded by our Brown Bag Auction on site as well as additional funds contributed during our annual Convention fund raising efforts. Money raised allows women of equity seeking groups or those from non-union organizations to be part of this learning, supportive and inclusive atmosphere. We were able to offer one scholarship this year to someone who would not otherwise have been able to attend.

We continued to support two new initiatives: Moon Time Sisters – a collection of feminine hygiene products to assist women and girls who do not have access to necessary items. And in support of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, along with our red dress display, we encouraged sisters to wear and/or bring red dresses to show solidarity to those affected. The results were very powerful!

By the end of the school participants felt empowered and ready to take on a stronger role within their unions and communities. Thank you to all the unions that make it possible for our facilitators to attend and share their knowledge with us. We could not do this work without them!

Sisters are welcome and encouraged to be part of the planning for 2023. Please contact Dionne Duff at the SFL at 525-0197 or [d.duff@sfl.sk.ca](mailto:d.duff@sfl.sk.ca) if you want to participate. Volunteers are important and we welcome participation.

The 2023 PSUW brochure will be available in January. The dates are June 12 – 15, 2023. We are still searching for a new home as Waskesiu has become unattainable for our needs.

Submitted by Lori Johb  
SFL President

## **SFL Ready for Work (RFW) Program**

The Ready for Work (RFW) program at the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour has had another successful year. Despite the difficulties that stemmed from the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we have continued to reach many young workers across the province and engage in meaningful conversations and interactions regarding their health and safety in the workplace. Despite the pandemic disrupting class time and drastically impacting our ability to present we facilitated 30 presentations during the 2021-2022 school year. To address pandemic related concerns, we added relevant content to our presentation to help young workers understand the responsibilities of themselves and their employers regarding safety and COVID-19. We recognize that this pandemic has been unprecedented, and has caused a great deal of fear, uncertainty, and stress for youth. We added a variety of information about COVID-19 into our presentation, and as awareness around the pandemic grew, we scaled this back to focus on the role of an employer and employee in keeping themselves and others safe. We also brought COVID-19 awareness into other sections of the presentation. For example, a small part of our discussion focused on personal protective equipment/biological hazards in the workplace.

Moving forward, we hope to build partnerships and connections not only with school divisions within the province, but also amongst the community at large. To achieve this, we have engaged in outreach efforts and have recently partnered with the Regina Public Interest Research Group (RPIRG) at the University of Regina. We will be providing a version of the RFW presentation aimed specifically at international students to educate them about their rights as new workers and teach them the skills to advocate for themselves in situations where they feel their health and safety is at risk. We launched this partnership earlier this fall, at the RPIRG AGM, to great success. We are planning to make the workshop a regular program for their students. We have also partnered with the Youth Employment Program through Regina's YWCA and have presented multiple sessions for the YWCA this year, with more organizations on the horizon for next year.

Even as we build these relationships, we are still prioritizing in-class work and are constantly finding ways to make our presentation even more appealing to educators across the province. We know that educators have other options for occupational health and safety lessons, but the feedback we receive year after year is that they appreciate having an in-person presentation with interaction and personal experience over an online learning module.

After the successful development of our Ready For Work app (a companion app to the RFW presentations for students to download), we have continued a partnership with the Saskatoon based electronics company, Push Interactions. The app features an interactive quiz that will help facilitators review their teaching metrics after a presentation. It has been very well received by the students who have used it this far, with the feedback we receive from students being consistently positive and grateful for a resource like this. To date we have over 600 downloads. We know that it is vital to meet students where they are at, and this is one way to work toward that goal.

We are very excited for the future of the RFW program as we continue to grow and expand. We are hoping to continue training facilitators around the province to reach new groups of students to spread the message of health and safety for students all over Saskatchewan. We know that the future of the Ready for Work program is bright!

Submitted by Janelle Gerard  
SFL Ready for Work Coordinator