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SPECIAL ISSUE  
OCTOBER 2023

**CUPE LOCAL 4207**

*Contract Academic Workers at Brock University*



# NEWSLETTER NEWSLETTER NEWSLETTER NEWSLETTER

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**FIGHTING FOR ACADEMIC WORKERS  
AT BROCK UNIVERSITY SINCE 1998!**

**CUPE** LOCAL  
**4207**  
**Brock University**

# NEWS & UPDATES

## UNIT 1 BENEFITS PLAN UPDATES

### WHAT'S NEW THIS YEAR?

- The number of hours required to qualify for rates subsidized by the employer has **decreased from 300 hours to 240 hours.**
- Vision Care benefit has been **increased to \$600 from \$400 every 24 months.**
- For Drug coverage, you are **no longer required to pay** for the Dispensing Fee.
- **90% coverage** of the entire reasonable & customary drug cost is eligible for reimbursement.
- Subsidized **rates have increased by less than 6%**; \$43.20 will be automatically deducted from the last five paydays of the semester for single coverage.

### TELUS HEALTH VIRTUAL CARE

- TELUS Health Virtual Care has been added as a benefit for all those who enroll in the plan.
- The plan has partnered with Telus Health Virtual Care telemedicine to offer virtual medical services to our enrolled members. Telus Health is based in Canada and all of its practitioners are licensed in the province for which they are offering their services.
- Telus Health offers the services of **nurses, nurse practitioners, physicians, and mental health counsellors** to its clients.
- All members enrolled for the Fall semester will automatically have access to this benefit effective November 1st, 2023. **Even if you only have single or couple coverage, the telemedicine services may be used by your spouse and any dependent children as well.**



Your Benefits Committee is always striving to provide you the coverage and services you need at a reasonable cost. Your health and wellbeing is our priority.

This is our seventh year of Health & Dental Benefits, and we have some changes and additions that we feel will help our members.

We understand that wellness needs can change and evolve over time, especially as we continue to navigate uncertainties and continued challenges in the COVID-19 era.



## **NEWLY ELECTED EXEC COMMITTEE MEMBERS**



### **MORGAN CROSBY**

**Vice President, Unit 1**

[vpunit1@cupe4207.org](mailto:vpunit1@cupe4207.org)

Hi everyone! My name is Morgan Crosby and I have been a Unit 1 member at Brock since September 2022. I am a graduate student in the social justice and equity studies program. Since joining the union I have been an active member and spent time on our bargaining committee. I have experience TAing for women and gender studies. I am looking forward to serving as you the VP of Unit 1 and helping with any questions you may have!



### **TRACY KENNEDY**

**Vice President, Unit 1 Instructors**

[vp1instructors@cupe4207.org](mailto:vp1instructors@cupe4207.org)

Hi folks, I started my Brock University journey as an undergrad student in 1988 and completed two undergrad degrees. I joined CUPE 4207 in 1999 as a TA in the Sociology department, became a course coordinator, and then I started Instructing my own Cyberculture courses in CPCF in 2002. I have taught at several universities and here at Brock U in Recreation & Leisure Studies and Child & Youth Studies. I now teach in the Digital Humanities – Interactive Arts & Sciences.

I have been the Membership Outreach Officer, been on the Unit 1 Bargaining Research Committee, the Unit 1 Bargaining Committee, and the CUPE Ontario Women's Committee. I've lead various incentives for the Good of the Union, such as an Indigenization plan for academic contract workers, and creating a Membership Recognition initiative that recognizes long-term CUPE 4207 employees with appreciation awards and certificates. I'm looking forward to connecting with instructors this year!

# A WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST BARGAINING UNIT: CLINICAL NURSING INSTRUCTORS!

In November 2022, after some challenges and tensions with the employer, a majority of Clinical Nursing Instructors voted to join CUPE 4207. The membership voted to accept Clinical Nurse Instructors to CUPE 4207, and following the Ontario Labour Relations Board decision, Clinical Nurses became Unit 4 in 2023.

## UNIT 4 EXECUTIVE & STEWARDS:

### MONICA HLYWKA

Vice President, Unit 4

[vpunit4@cupe4207.org](mailto:vpunit4@cupe4207.org)



Hi my name is Monica Hlywka (Ha-loo-ka) and I am the new Vice President for unit 4 (Brock University – Clinical Nursing Instructors) of CUPE 4207. I am also a member of the bargaining committee for unit 4. Unit 4 is a newly formed union and will be negotiating our first collective agreement. I am a Registered Nurse with a Masters in Health Studies, teaching focus. I am a very driven person, and I love to succeed in everything I do. My 2 biggest passions are teaching health professionals and competing in duathlons which is a run-bike-run competition. I should also mention that my human (husband & 2 daughters) and fur (2 kittens and a dog) family hold my heart strings and I feel so fortunate to have them in my life.

### REBECCA LAROCCA

Lead Steward, Unit 4

[leadunit4@cupe4207.org](mailto:leadunit4@cupe4207.org)



My name is Rebecca LaRocca. I am Brock alumni and after completion of a BScN, I completed a Graduate Degree in Nursing at McMaster University. Clinically I have worked in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit at McMaster Hospital as a bedside RN for the past 17 years. I have also been teaching at Brock as a Clinical Instructor and in the Nursing Simulation Lab for the past eleven years. I love the Brock community and enjoy helping students learn the skill and art of nursing! I am excited as lead steward unit 4 to advocate for our members and work collaboratively to seek positive change. I am a mother of four children, one girl and three rambunctious boys! Our hobbies include skiing in the winter and cottaging in the summer. Looking forward to working amongst a great team!

### AMANDA SINGER

Unit 4 Steward

[evlyn\\_ca@yahoo.ca](mailto:evlyn_ca@yahoo.ca)





# INTRODUCING OUR NEW DEPARTMENTAL STEWARDS!

## CANADIAN STUDIES

Brian DeRuiter: bderuiter@brocku.ca

## CHILD & YOUTH STUDIES

Nwakerendu Waboso: kwaboso@brocku.ca

Ike Ikerinwu: ikerionwui@gmail.com

## ENGLISH

Claire Thyne: clthyne1@gmail.com

## LABOUR STUDIES

Karen Hofman: karenoka@hotmail.com

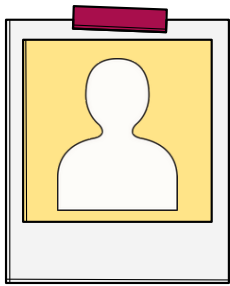
## PHYSICS

Parisa Rouzbazar: parisa.roozbazar@gmail.com

## POLITICAL SCIENCE

Tim Fowler: tim.dh.fowler@gmail.com

Ron Walker: rw94ba@gmail.com



## DON'T SEE YOUR DEPARTMENT LISTED?

**We are looking for you.  
Become a steward for  
your department!**

Each department with Unit 1 members can have up to two stewards representing them. You are eligible to be a steward for a department that you work in or have held a contract with in the past 12 months. You must also be a member in good standing.

This is a great way to get involved in your union! You will be a representative for the members in your department and work to make sure your coworkers are informed and engaged. You will also be the eyes and ears for the union looking out for potential workplace issues or violations of the collective agreement.

These positions are appointed by the Executive Committee as members express interest, so if you are interested please reach out!

Departmental stewards typically will hold the position until the following September.

### Departmental Steward Duties (from our bylaws):

- Recruit and organize members in their departments and encourage them to become active in the Local.
- Act as representatives of the Local to the employees in their departments.
- Serve as the liaison between the members they represent and the Lead Steward, and, where applicable, the Faculty Steward and Vice-Presidents.
- Advise the members of the departments with regard to matters involving the Collective Agreement.
- Organize the members to attend GMMs and other Local events.
- Distribute information of the Local.
- Attend, once per term, a Stewards Council meeting to report on any issues and findings from their work in the departments.
- Where appropriate, process the grievances of the members in their departments and represent their members in grievance meetings.
- Submit monthly written reports to the Stewards' Council to report on their activities since the previous meeting. Stewards must submit reports to at least 50% of the Stewards' Council meetings called to receive out of pocket expenses.



# INDIGENOUS SOLIDARITY BEYOND ORANGE SHIRT DAY

Last month on September 29th, CUPE 4207 held an open house to recognize and honour residential school survivors and their families. While it is important to acknowledge Truth and Reconciliation in September and participate in Orange Shirt Day, we live and work on Indigenous land every day and as such our actions of solidarity must be year round as well.



*Exec members Phil Wachel, Tracy Kennedy, and Darrin Sunstrum at CUPE 4207's open house on September 29th.*

## HONORING THE PAST, COMMITTING TO A BETTER FUTURE

**Educate yourself:** Learn about Indigenous history, culture, and challenges. Understand the impact of colonization and the ongoing struggles for justice.

**Listen and learn:** Amplify Indigenous voices by reading their stories, attending events, trainings, and engaging with their perspectives.

**Respect sovereignty:** Recognize indigenous nations' right to self-determination, respecting treaties, and land rights.

**Solidarity, not saviors:** Be a partner, not a savior. Respect Indigenous agency and leadership.

**Cultural appropriation:** Avoid appropriating Indigenous rights and cultural preservation.

**Reconciliation:** Learn the proper way to work towards truth and reconciliation. Stop the land acknowledgments and challenge the non-Indigenous people doing sharing circles, workshops and trainings on Truth and Reconciliation, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

**Reflect and self-correct:** Allyship is a journey of growth and self-improvement. Be open to making a mistake, but listening to feedback and doing self-reflection.

**Challenge Bias:** Examine and confront your own biases and stereotypes. Be mindful of microaggressions.

**Advocate:** Support policies and initiatives promoting Indigenous rights and cultural preservation.

**Support Organizations:** Consider donating or volunteering with organizations dedicated to Indigenous rights and well-being.



**"EDUCATION IS WHAT GOT US INTO  
THIS MESS...BUT EDUCATION IS THE  
KEY TO RECONCILIATION."**

**Senator Murray Sinclair,  
Chair of the Truth and Reconciliation  
Commission**

# OCTOBER IS WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH



In 1992, the Government of Canada designated October as Women's History Month, marking the beginning of an annual celebration of the outstanding achievements of women and girls throughout Canada's history.

This year's theme, **Through Her Lens: Celebrating the Diversity of Women**, emphasizes the importance of recognizing the achievements and contributions of women from diverse backgrounds. It focuses on the unique perspectives, experiences, and challenges faced by Indigenous women; women from 2SLGBTQI+ communities; and newcomer, racialized, and migrant women.

## SYLVIA D. HAMILTON



A Nova Scotian and one of the most influential public historians working in Canada today, earning a reputation for excellence over four decades of active history-making.

A direct descendent of the Black Refugees-Survivors of the War of 1812, Hamilton has devoted her life's work to uncovering stories of the struggles and accomplishments of African Canadians.

**"Had my bold ancestors not been imaginative, they would never have survived. They were the original Afro-futurists. I am who they imagined."**

## THE ORIGINS OF WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH AND PERSONS DAY IN CANADA

On October 18th, 1929 the previous Supreme Court decision was appealed to the British Privy Council who declared that women are "persons" and could therefore be appointed to the Senate of Canada. Important to highlight, however, is that this decision excluded Indigenous and Asian women.

In 1927, 5 women launched a legal challenge that would mark a turning point for equality rights in Canada. Emily Murphy, Nellie McClung, Louise McKinney, Irene Parlby and Henrietta Muir Edwards were journalists, politicians, reformers and activists from Alberta. They are now known as the Famous Five.

They asked the Supreme Court of Canada to answer the following question: Does the word "person" in Section 24 of the British North America Act include female persons? After 5 weeks of debate, the Supreme Court decided that the word "person" did not include women. The Famous Five didn't give up and the decision was appealed in 1929.



Photo of an article from *Farm and Ranch Review*, 2 January, 1930 (Vol XXVI, No. 1, pp.16), titled "Now That We Are Persons" written by Nellie McClung.



# WOMEN'S HISTORY IN THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

This women's history month we highlight the contributions of women who have fought against injustice and encourage everyone to learn more about these women trailblazers.

The typical union member in Canada is a woman who works in the public sector. 2019 Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey data reveals that women made up 53.1 per cent of union members. But despite becoming numerically dominant within unions, women are still under-represented in positions of union leadership. The number of women leading national unions in Canada today can be counted on one hand.

And even while being severely under-represented in positions of leadership, union women have undeniably had an impact. Their activism paved the way for the labour movement to campaign for and secure pay equity, employer-paid daycare, paid maternity leave and rules banning gender-based discrimination in the workplace.



## GRACE HARTMAN

**CUPE National President, 1975–1983.**

*The first woman to lead a national union in North America!*

As a clerk-typist for the township of North York in the mid-fifties, Grace Hartman was outraged over workplace discrimination against women. It sparked an interest in unions that led to a 30-year career as a labour activist.

In 1981 she was jailed for 45 days for participating in an illegal strike; she insisted that hospital workers, legally barred from striking, must have full collective bargaining rights.





# FAIRNESS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS: STATUS FOR ALL!

**It's time for status for all workers—including migrants and international students whose labour we depend on.** It is essential that the labour movement steps up and fights to raise the bar for all workers. As union members, we have access to rights that not all workers in this country do— the right to unionize and collectively bargain.

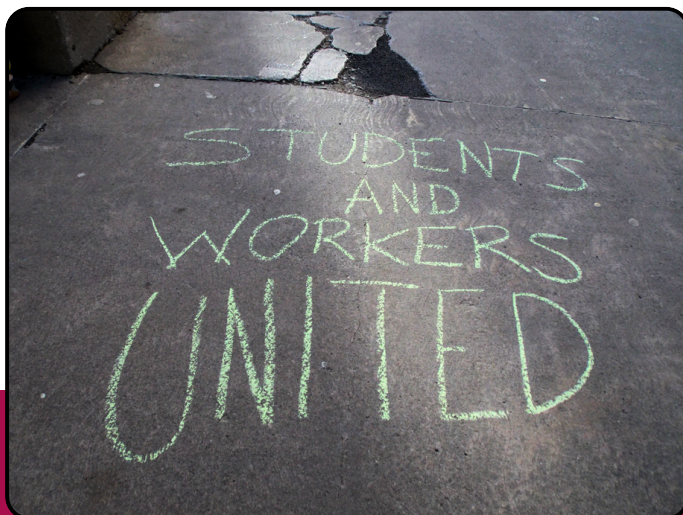
Niagara has long been a hub for migrant labour and resistance, but this reality is often overlooked because it is uncomfortable for us to confront our complacency.

Migrant workers make vital contributions to Canada's economy and have valuable skills for which there is consistent demand, and yet paths for long-term or permanent residency are extremely limited or non-existent for most workers working in agriculture and other low-skills sectors. Even international students who are highly skilled and have Canadian degrees find themselves struggling to find employment that will allow them to access permanent residency and OHIP due to xenophobia and increasing anti-immigrant sentiment.

In 2018, there were 570,000 study-permit holders in Canada. The federal government estimated their spending, including tuition, amounted to \$21.6 billion and supported 170,000 Canadian jobs. While more recent stats were not available, considering Canada launched a campaign to double its annual number of international students by 2022 it is safe to say this number will continue to rise.

Currently, international students are not permitted to work more than 20 hours per week (unless they are working for their educational institution). Restrictions on work allow employers who are aware of their status may exploit them under threat of denouncing them to immigration authorities. International students are often recruited by brokers who they will then be indebted to, on top of unregulated tuition fees at least 3x the cost for domestic students, unaffordable rent, groceries, and so on.

"The policy creates vulnerability, maybe not intentionally, but the way the policy was designed and enacted is what it's producing," says Wilfrid Laurier University professor Margaret Walton-Roberts, whose research focuses on international student migration. "There's this desire to use this (education) stream to get permanent residence. All the way along, there are a lot of people who have an interest in making money out of this group, including the Canadian government.

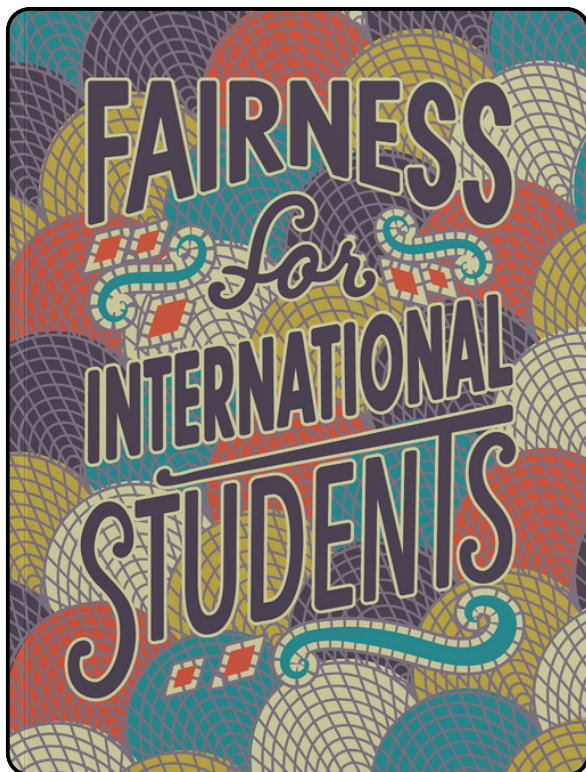


**"IT'S BEEN USED BY THE GOVERNMENT TO PROP UP THE POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION SECTOR. WE KIND OF THINK OF (INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS) AS CASH COWS."**

While budget cuts have allowed for the under-funding of universities, Canadian institutions (including Brock) have increasingly relied on the unregulated tuition fees from international students. While currently international students make up 13% of Brock's student population, 38% of Brock's tuition revenue comes from international students.

Despite the risks, international students have been speaking up about some of the issues they face, including owed wages and wage theft as well as complaints about workplace abuse and exploitation. While migrant rights advocates initially referred students to unions and settlement services, they found that resources and supports for international students are practically non-existent.

Given the lack of meaningful supports for international students, **it is imperative that as a post-secondary sector union that we show up for our international student-worker members and advocate for those who are not.**



The struggles of international students and other migrants are becoming more visible, recently they have been vilified in the media. A recent poll revealed that 63% of Canadians believe high immigration levels are impacting housing negatively. Migrant Rights Network points out that housing and immigration were first linked by opinion writers in the mainstream media just this summer. They argued that Canada is bringing in too many im/migrants, quicker than the rate of construction. According to this narrative, with fewer homes, prices and rent are rising.

However, this narrative overlooks the fact that our economy depends on the labour of migrants to fill gaps in our aging population and that housing prices and supply are determined by market forces. **It is convenient to let migrants be scapegoats while the rich continue to profit from rising prices and stagnant wages.**

Fighting for the rights of migrant workers raises the floor for all of us. If we don't fight for them, xenophobia and racist sentiments will continue to grow. We need to fight for real solutions to the various crises we face today rather than letting the media and politicians scapegoat migrants.

#### References:

Keung, N., Teotonio, I., LaFleche, G. "We Think of Them as Cash Cows:" International Students Want to Immigrate, but Colleges, Employers Want to Boost Their Bottom Lines, St. Catharines Standard, 27 Sept. 2019. [www.migrantworkersrights.net/en/resources/we-think-of-them-as-cash-cows-international-student](http://www.migrantworkersrights.net/en/resources/we-think-of-them-as-cash-cows-international-student).

Migrant students united policy submission to global affairs canada and IRCC 2023. Migrant Workers Alliance for Change. 31 July 2023. <https://migrantworkersalliance.org/policy/msujuly2023submission/>

Obokata, T. Report: Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences. 6 September 2023. <https://www.migrantworkersrights.net/en/resources/canada-anchor-the-fight-against-contemporary-forms->

# ARE YOU A MEMBER IN GOOD STANDING?

Everyone who pays dues and does work at Brock University that is covered by one of our bargaining units is automatically covered by their Collective Agreement and entitled to union representation in accordance with Ontario labour law.

However, according to the Constitution of our National Union, becoming a full Member in Good Standing of the union is a more deliberate and intentional process.

To become a member in good standing, download the form at [tinyurl.com/4207MIGS](https://tinyurl.com/4207MIGS), fill it out, and email it to [info@cupe4207.org](mailto:info@cupe4207.org) or drop it off in our mailbox outside our office at GL-A 123.

You will continue to be a member in good standing as long as you are covered by the collective agreement. Becoming a member in good standing is also how you receive your union card!

**CUPE-SCFP** / Canadian Union of Public Employees  
Syndicat canadien de la fonction publique

**APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP  
TO CUPE LOCAL \_\_\_\_\_**

▶ Last name	First name		
▶ Address			
City	Province	Postal Code	
▶ Phone cell	Phone home		
▶ Personal Email address			
▶ Employer			
▶ Employer address			
City	Province	Postal Code	
▶ Work Phone			
▶ Classification/Department			
▶ <input type="checkbox"/> Full time <input type="checkbox"/> Part Time <input type="checkbox"/> Casual			

**DECLARATION**  
**I, the undersigned:**  
Apply for membership in the Canadian Union of Public Employees and its Local \_\_\_\_ and agree to abide by its constitution and bylaws.  
If accepted into membership, I promise to support and comply with the Constitution of this Union, to work to improve the economic and social conditions of other members and other workers, to defend and work to improve the democratic rights and liberties of workers and that I will not purposely or knowingly harm or assist in harming another member of the Union.

Applicant Signature	Day/Month/Year
Witness Signature (on behalf of the union)	Day/Month/Year

## CONTRIBUTE TO CUPE 4207'S NEWSLETTER!

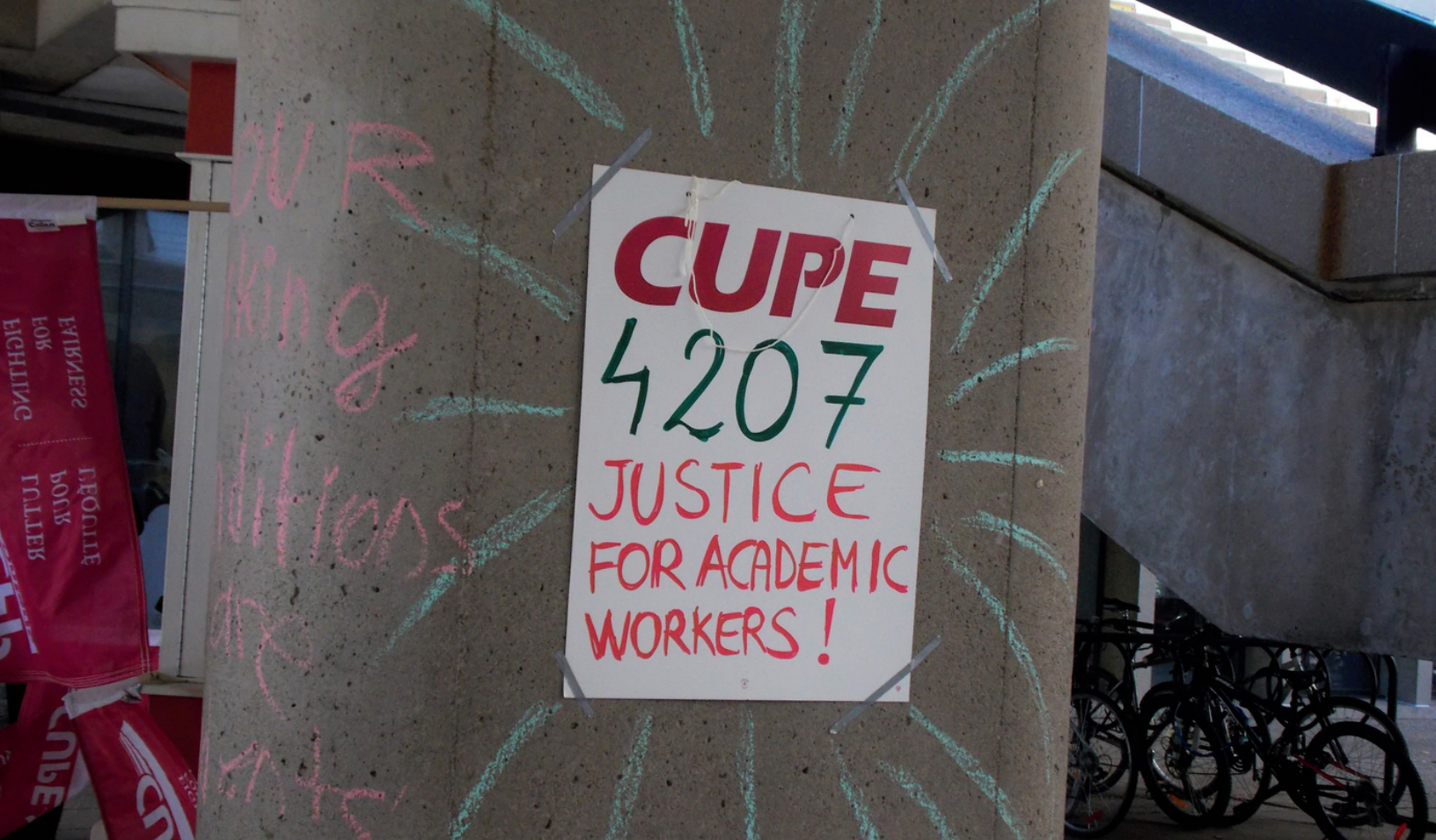
We are working on our next newsletter which will be a Special 25th Anniversary edition!

If you have photos or stories you'd like to share, please let us know. This can be anything—an article, a piece of union history, a short blurb about what being in 4207 has meant to you.

Email [outreach@cupe4207.org](mailto:outreach@cupe4207.org) with any contributions!







# **CUPE** LOCAL **4207**

***Contract Academic Workers at Brock University***

## **CONTACT US**



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