

22.05.13 - Election Win Statement

Dear friends & labour comrades: I'm pleased to share that on May 6th, I was elected to the position of CUPW's National Vice President of Organizing!

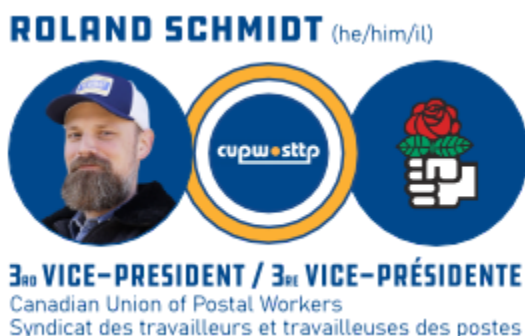
During our campaign, we framed the race as not just a choice between candidates but as a referendum on the direction of our union. Do we maintain our current course, or do we reform to embrace a committed strategy to organize our workfloors? The results are clear -- CUPW delegates decisively supported my call for reform on the first ballot over the three other challengers.

I want to thank the other candidates for putting their names forward. Respectful competition and debate raises the political maturity of our organization by encouraging our members to analyze different perspectives. I also want to extend heartfelt appreciation to my supporters and allies who helped sustain our insurgent spirit throughout the campaign.

Those closest to me know how seriously I take, and will seize, this opportunity. Like so many of our members, I deeply understand feeling abandoned to fend for myself against the boss. Had I not experienced the transformative power of solidarity in action, I would've long left Canada Post. Instead, armed with the certainty of what's possible when we rally our workfloors, I will use the year I have to try to restore the belief of our members in the collective power of our union.

This project to revitalize CUPW will only succeed to the extent that activists across the country will join our growing ranks to take on this difficult task. As we like to say in Edmonton: more hands make lighter work. Now that the campaign is over, the real work can begin. I look forward to us sharing it. No struggle, no victory. Power to the working class.

In solidarity,



22.05.06 - Conference Election Speech Transcript

Comrades: Strengthening CUPW has been the singular passion of my entire adult life. I want our union to reclaim the power we once had to win better conditions for our members and be a leading example in the labour movement.

If we are to develop a realistic plan to overcome our challenges we must be honest with how our union has been struggling for a long time. Our bargaining rights are routinely trampled by the government, which prevents us from meaningfully improving our jobs, or fully stopping operational changes like automation, modern post, or SSD. As our conditions erode, our

members become increasingly disengaged from the union, and often blame leadership for what's happening.

Talking a good game will not be enough -- our union needs someone with the extensive experience of actually leading job actions and mentoring organizers to rally our workfloors. In 2011, when grievances and consults were powerless against chronic forced overtime, I helped lead an Edmonton-wide revolt against direct orders and suspension threats to end forceback and improve staffing.

Enshrining the achievements and lessons of that campaign, I co-wrote a direct action course called 'Taking Back Our Workfloor' that teaches workers how to effectively build collective power, confront management, and escalate demands. In my first year as Edmonton's Local president, I personally recruited and taught this course to over 250 members, as well as developed secondary leadership in our local, and region, to share this training on their own. The quality of this program led to immediate successful job actions and boosted engagement in our Local, as well as the material being adopted by other unions in Alberta and B.C.

Before the pandemic stopped group gatherings, plans were in place to travel to Calgary, Lethbridge and Winnipeg to train activists to run the course independently. Last year, Winnipeg President, Brother Matthew Aitken, and I initiated monthly discussions with other Local presidents and leading allies to resume our organizing strategy once COVID restrictions were lifted. As 3rd VP, I would use the national platform to expand the solid work we've already been doing on our own for the past year to the rest of the country.

During this election, every candidate has tried to present themselves as a champion of workfloor organizing but I have the lived experience of actually doing it. Effective organizing, whether internal or external, is one of the hardest things a union activist can do, and should not be taken on by those without the proper support and mentorship. I'm a trusted team builder, organizer, and trainer because I'm honest about the risks that come with challenging authority and what steps must be taken to build capacity to win.

Comrades, this election is not just about who you want to oversee our National organizing strategy but a referendum on the direction of our union. Do we maintain the same passive course or do we reform to also embrace a committed organizing strategy?

My motivations are clear: I only want this position to the extent that you, the leading activists of our union, want a plan that centers our membership's collective strength to effectively fight the corporation and government. With your support, I will spend every moment of the next year trying to revitalize Local engagement and activism in this union, just as I have done for almost two decades in CUPW. Never forget, without struggle, there can be no victory. Solidarity.