

**REPORT
OF THE
A/NATIONAL PRESIDENT
Shimen Fayad
February 2020 – May 2020**

To say the last few months have passed quickly would be an understatement! We find ourselves in unprecedented times and a new way of working. We have had to adapt and adjust to working from home in a virtual environment. This has affected how we have been providing support to our members as well and for some it has taken its toll. We need to remind ourselves we are not alone and we have our union brothers and sisters in which we can reach out to when we are having difficult times.

First, I would like to recognize Brother Todd Panas for the years he dedicated to the former UEW in many roles and for the last few years as UHEW President. He has had a long career as a public servant but more importantly as a union activist striving for improving conditions for all our members and for this, I want to thank him. After Brother Panas resigned, we were planning the send-off he deserved at our next UHEW Triennial Convention but with the current COVID-19 Pandemic restrictions, we have had to put the planning on hold. Brother Panas, we wish you all the best in your retirement and look forward to the day when we can have a celebration of your service!

Secondly, I would like to thank the UHEW staff for all their dedication to their roles as we continue to work remotely. This has also been an adjustment for them. The UHEW National Office had to close on March 17 when the Ontario Premier declared a state of emergency and the PSAC closed their National and Regional offices. Since March, the staff have been trying to meet deadlines and the needs of our members all while coping with the change to the work environment.

Of course, I cannot thank the Council enough for choosing such a capable interim National Vice President, Brother Benoit Thibault. Not only did he step up at a moment notice and at a time of significant change, he stepped up to the plate to assist me with the UHEW National Office daily operations and has been able to adapt to a new pace that comes with a full-time elected position. Benoit comes with vast array of knowledge and experience from many years of not only working with members and employers to ensure healthy workplaces but also, he brings his ability to work with others. This is a key skill when stepping into a position that will assist me in moving Council forward to work as an effective team.

Since taking the role as a/President, the last week of February, I participated and worked on many issues, National Committees and files. The following list is a broader list of activities I have participated in;

- Worked with senior ECCC HR on escalation of pay files
- Meetings with Senior management and LR in regards to Pandemic planning and response
- Worked on individual member files as brought forward by RVP
- Co-Chaired various National and Branch UMCC
- Participated in ECCC teleconferences surrounding COVID until schedule conflict then assigned to Benoit
- National Board of Directors weekly updates
- ISC specific members issues
- DFO specific member issues
- ECCC specific member issues
- Health Canada specific member issues
- Public Health Agency specific member issues
- Training provided to Benoit on operations of UHEW
- Teleconference with new LRO and Benoit for overview of position, training plan, expectations
- Teleconference with new UHEW Quebec RVP for overview of RVP duties and field questions
- Teleconference with new UHEW /NBPEI RVP for overview of RVP duties and field questions
- Teleconferences with UHEW Council for updates on NBoD activities, department updates on COVID response plans and activities
- Teleconferences with staff to advise of VP duties and UHEW COVID response plan
- Teleconferences with Fishery Officer committee to address action plan
- Teleconferences with NIHB RVPs to address upcoming transfer of work to third party
- Teleconferences with departments and PSAC to create MOUs outside standard Collective Agreements
- Teleconferences with departments and Treasury Board for feedback on ESA presentation before roll out to members. Benoit has participated in these meetings as training
- Discussion with PIPSC on various common issues in various departments
- Discussion with UHEW Director of Enforcement for update on activities
- Meeting with finance officers to review financial statements and draft budget
- Teleconference with National Bank and RBC on performance of investments
- Standing Finance Committee meeting to review and adjust draft budget for 2021-2023
- UHEW is in a strong financial position
- I drafted regulation motions after Finance Committee discussion for Council
- Participated in meetings with departments surrounding Return to Work plans at the National level

UHEW has endured significant change over the last few months. Many members may feel a certain anxiety that comes when so many changes happen in an organization over a short period of time. I want to assure everyone, that we will not fail them. We, the Council, will continue to work hard as a team so that we create a union all our members can be proud to be a part of.

As we move forward, we will keep in mind the most important aspect of UHEW is our members! Our motto from our UHEW 2017 Convention, “Members First”, is what we will focus on and is what still motivates me! I endeavour to continue to be supportive of Council in their role as the decision makers in between conventions and I will continue to share information and discussions at the National level. The Council and I are here to support you!

In solidarity,

Shimen Fayad
a/National President of UHEW