



Community-Based Organization Workers' Conference November 5 & 6, 2015

This year the Community-Based Organization (CBO) Workers' Conference, held in Regina, was attended by 35 members from SEIU-West and SGEU. Those in attendance were presented with information about the most recent Union activity related to their sector.

Conference attendees, Andrea Shad and Trish Patey, stood up in front of their peers and presented their compelling work experiences through the 'CBO Live Talks' format.

Participants also heard from many speakers. Norm and Annette Phillips addressed the importance of self-care. They focussed on the need for every CBO worker to practice some simple and practical techniques in order to take care of themselves because an injured or burnt-out worker does not work to their fullest potential. In addition, it can and mostly likely will impact their personal life. Norm used his own experience as a former Licensed Practical Nurse. During the course of his career, caring for others and not himself resulted in him suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Both Annette and Norm spoke openly about the impact of Norm's PTSD on their family. They delivered a strong message about the importance of men speaking out about their mental health issues.

The next speaker, Santos Garcia, described his life experience as a political refugee and the discrimination he has faced. As an immigrant, a community leader and an advocate for diversity, he spoke passionately about the need for people to be aware of their own prejudices and to be open to others. He also spoke about the need for members to become active in their Union and exercise their democratic rights. Not doing so could result in the erosion of them. In addition he emphasized that standing up now is important so that future generations will not suffer. He cautioned those in attendance to not take our freedoms for granted.

The final speaker was Tom Howe, SEIU-West Member Action Coordinator, who motivated the members assembled in the room to take action by drawing attention to the risks of privatization of public services in Saskatchewan.

Overall the conference was considered a great success by those who attended. It is hoped that the momentum created in the CBO sector does not slow down so that our members are able to continue to provide valuable services to those who need it in their communities.