



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO EDUCATION WORKERS

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Executive Committee

16 August, 2017

Chair:

Ryan Culpepper

Meric Gertler

President

University of Toronto

Secretary-Treasurer:

Thomas Laughlin

Vice Chair, Unit 1:

Megan Harris

Dear Meric,

Vice Chair, Unit 3:

Erich Vogt

As members of the Canadian Union of Public Employees who work at the University of Toronto, we strongly condemn the use of our workplace as a platform for hateful, racist, anti-Black, anti-Semitic, Islamophobic and otherwise white-supremacist rhetoric.

Vice Chair, Unit 5:

vacant

As trade unionists, we are conscious of our history. The labour movement is part of the larger civil rights movement. Since our inception, we have always supported and organized alongside anti-racist groups, recognizing that workers' rights have value only when they can be fully and equally enjoyed by all. Today we recommit ourselves to these values, and we need our employer to do the same.

Vice Chair, Colleges:

Kristen Allen

Communications/Recording

Secretary:

Pamela Arancibia

The presence of white-supremacist and far-right nationalist groups on campus is an affront to our values. It is degrading and dehumanizing. It is a threat to the safety and wellbeing of our members, who have the legal right—and the human right—to a safe and harassment-free workplace. To allow these groups to take up space in and use the resource of the University of Toronto is to be complicit with these groups' values and actions.

Internal Liaison Officer:

Meaghan Marian

External Liaison Officer:

Lahoma Thomas

Grievance Officer:

Kevin Edmonds

We need our employer to stand with us. This is not a situation that invites neutrality. The liberal value of free speech cannot be used as a shield for fundamentally illiberal, anti-social and violent groups whose activities threaten the basic freedoms of others. Safety and equality are the preconditions of any genuinely free speech, and they must be protected at all costs.

Executive Director:

Wayne Dealy

Staff Representatives:

Rebecca Strung

Tiffany Balducci

Tamara Williams

The University of Toronto has put out a statement claiming ignorance because these groups have not made a formal booking request. This is not sufficient. Groups planning rallies on campus seldom make booking requests. We never do. We show up and demonstrate, as is our right. They will likely do the same.

We are asking that these groups be kept out of our workplace. We are asking for our employer to act in affirmation of our members' dignity and human rights. We are asking for the employer to clearly state that white-supremacist and white-nationalist groups will be denied access to the campus.

If these groups are allowed to demonstrate on campus, some of our members will be there to oppose them. Others will choose to protect themselves by not coming to an unsafe workplace, and we will support them in that choice. But we hope it won't come to that.

Sincerely, and on behalf of CUPE 3902,

Ryan Culpepper

Chair

Canadian Union of Public Employees, Local 3902