

BULLETIN

Regional conference gives BCFED province-wide focus

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"We need to be the BC Federation of Labour - not the Downtown Vancouver Federation of Labour."

That's how Jim Sinclair, BC Fed President, opened The fourth BC Federation of Labour Regional Conference was held June 6-7 in Kimberley. He was remembering the words of a delegate to the convention that saw the Federation move from annual to biannual conventions.

Chaired by Jackie Spain, President of the East Kootenay and District Labour Council and a member of HSA, the conference focused on the theme of "Good Jobs - Strong Communities."

The first day of the conference, delegates learned about the region's rich labour history and about the successes of a United Steelworkers Union local in the region that has been working to increase members' engagement with their union by reaching out to members and connecting the dots about their union's relevance to their work.

"We have to take the union meeting to our members, we can't wait for them to come to us," said Alex Hanson, president USW Local 9346.

Delegates also heard from a panel about successful campaigns including the BCGEU's Children and Risk

campaign, the Together Fairness Works campaign led by the Canadian Labour Congress, work by Green Jobs BC to bring environmental and labour sectors together, the BCFED's progress in electing progressive leadership at the municipal level and the BC New Democratic Party's fight against ismantling of the Agricultural Land Reserve.

The second day of the conference, delegates worked on developing specific plans for activities in the region - including engaging members at their local worksites, planning for municipal elections, and organizing a Labour Day event.

Before participating in the conference, HSA President Val Avery and Vice President (and Region 9 board member) Janice Morrison spent an afternoon meeting with HSA members at East Kootenay Regional Hospital in Cranbrook, and heard about a number of issues related to health and safety and staff shortages.

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