

# Convention News

## **HEU kicks off convention with solidarity greetings, speakers and debate**

The 558 delegates at HEU's 26<sup>th</sup> biennial convention rolled up their sleeves and got to work on Monday, the first of their five days of meetings.

They welcomed the 50 new groups of members, representing over 2600 workers, who have joined HEU since the last convention and began discussion on resolutions, constitutional amendments and the union's strategic directions document.

Delegates received greetings from Musqueam First Nation Elder Larry Grant, followed by a solidarity message from Vancouver and District Labour Council President Bill Saunders and a visit from the members of the NDP caucus.

## **Carole James addresses delegates, calls on members to send a message in '09 election**

Delegates welcomed NDP leader Carole James with a standing ovation, as she thanked them for the opportunity to speak with "the heart and soul of a good health care system.



"I recognize how important you are," said James, "to the patients and people you care for 24 hours a day, seven days a week."

James also thanked members for fighting Bill 29 all the way to

the Supreme Court and for members' ongoing work to strengthen public health care across the province.

From the struggles at Cowichan and Ponderosa Lodges, to the P3 fights in Vernon and Kelowna and activism to protect the hospitals on Northern Vancouver Island, James told delegates how proud she has been to stand alongside HEU members.

"You've seen first-hand the neglect of health care by Gordon Campbell's Liberals," she said.

"But I've been struck by the fact that in the face of these challenges you've been there, resilient, strong, working harder than ever."

James concluded by calling on delegates to organize and vote in 2009 for a government that believes in a strong public health care system and respects the health care workers who keep it running.



**Working Together • Standing Together  
Leading Together**

## **Bernardo gives first report as Financial Secretary**

On Monday, delegates heard from Financial Secretary Donisa Bernardo, who provided a comprehensive overview of the union's finances and key expenditures over the last two years.

"I am pleased to tell you we are financially stable and our auditors have given us an unqualified audit report," she said.

She reminded the convention that in these uncertain economic times it was



critical to remain fiscally responsible, "by making sure our revenues are dedicated not only to strengthening the Hospital Employees' Union, but to enhancing the lives of our members."

## **Amendments and Resolutions**

*Resolution 9*, passed.

*Constitutional Amendment 59*, defeated.

## **Later Tuesday...**

Equity Night 7:00 - 9:00, Plaza Ballroom

