



Dear Members,

Like many of you, I am happy to be approaching the end of the 2020 year with hopes of a better one ahead. Looking back over the last 12 months, I feel like we have lived multiple years in one. While the lows for many have been substantial, we as a society have also experienced wonderful moments of caring, love and support. People continue to work, volunteer and support their communities in inspiring ways of kindness, generosity and perseverance, which shine through in spite of some very horrible circumstances worldwide.

Within our Local, our members continue to go to work every day. It hasn't been easy, all of our jobs can be overwhelming under normal circumstance and continuing that work through a pandemic only adds to the stress and challenges that we regularly face. Yet we do our jobs, support each other, and strive to find joy in everyday interactions. I think it is important to be proud of the work we do and differences we make in the lives of students, clients, and their families.

Many of our members will spend the next two weeks on winter break. While others will continue to work through the holidays. For all of us, it will be a different kind of holiday then in the past. There will be no vacations, holiday parties or trips to see family and this heartbreaking for everyone. It is so important to honour the feelings that this will bring up and our hope is that each of you find some ways to help deal with holiday fatigue and loss. Each of our Units have access to Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) or Employee Family Assistance Programs (EFAP) These programs offer a variety of free services and access to that information can be found on each of the Locals employer's websites under staff links (with the user code and passwords).

On behalf of the Executive of Local 523, we want to wish each of you a healthy and happy holiday season. We hope you find time to spend with family and friends at home or online and that you may find time to rest and recharge for the new year. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank our Shop Stewards and Committee Group reps for the hard work and many volunteer hours they put in to helping our Local operate. We value and appreciate your contributions.

#### **New Information on Health Checks**

Workers across BC will be required to perform a daily health check before entering the workplace and your employer will be providing the method for how this will be implemented. The following links reference this change and please feel free to contact your Shop Stewards or Unit Chairs if you have any questions or concerns about this process.

<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/about-us/covid-19-updates/health-and-safety/health-checks>

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/covid-19/covid-19-pho-order-workplace-safety.pdf>

**Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from your Local 523 Executive**

