

Hello Sisters and Brothers of 1996-O,

I would like to recognize and congratulate the executive team in this recent Local executive election. They are an amazingly diligent and hardworking team who will continue to fight for the rights of our members as they all have for many years.

I have had the distinct pleasure of working with every single one of them for the past fifteen years or more. I could not picture a more effective team to represent you all.

I chose not to run in this executive election. It was with a heavy heart that I took this decision. As some of you may know, I am not doing well physically and am currently not at work.

Although I truly hoped to continue in my role as Vice President of Local 1996-O, I felt that it would be unfair to leave our members without the representation that you all deserve while being unsure of when I will be able to return.

I would like to Congratulate and wish Llyod Bishop well in his new role as Secretary of the local. Lloyd brings many years of union experience to the table and is a great advocate for our members. As many of you in Cabling are already aware, Lloyd has always fought not just for cabling techs as a chief steward, but for all members. Lloyd will make a great addition to an already phenomenal team.

Brian Lowery has reprised his role as Treasurer of 1996-O and our Local's main mental health advocate. In addition to representing all of our members on labour issues Brian has received a plethora of Mental Health training and certifications over these past years, on his own time and is in my opinion likely the most well-versed advocate in mental health within BTS and within the national union. He also fights diligently for our members who are off on benefits and those who seek accommodations in order to best assist them. I am sure he will continue to support our members with a passion that only he can bring as he has done for almost 20 years.

I would like to congratulate Chris Glover as he takes on his new role as Vice President. Chris has worked tirelessly for the membership, first as Chief Steward in 416 East followed by his two terms as Secretary of Local 1996-O. Chris brings a wealth of knowledge and over fifteen years of union experience to the table. He has the heart of a fighter and has never shied away from taking tough action when needed to best serve the membership. I have no doubt that Chris will excel in his new position as Vice President as he excelled in his previous role.

Lee Zommers has given much of his professional and personal life at BTS over to serving this membership. He did this first as a union rep, than as Vice President and finally as President. He is and has been tireless in his advocacy for all of you. He brings over twenty years of experience to his role and is a treasure trove of knowledge. His leadership has been to the benefit this entire local. He is constantly engaging in whatever fight needs to be fought in order to benefit all of you. He has the respect of all who know him and he does not back down even in the face of challenging odds. You could not ask for a better President than Lee and I hope you will all join me in congratulating him on his second term as President of this amazing Local.

I have served the last three years as Vice President of Local 1996-O. This has been a truly eye opening experience. I would like to take a moment to thank the Executive for all they do and have done. Many of you never hear about the amount of time and effort that goes into the role of being an executive member. The evening phone or in person meetings with members, company representatives, the National Union and each other. Many of you never hear about the 70 to 80 hour work weeks without overtime compensation. You never hear about the heartache we feel when things may not go the way we hoped. The executive members have all chosen this path time and time again in order to ensure that you all have the best representation possible from your Union.

As I prepare to step away from my role as Vice president of Local 1996-O I would to leave you with some words.

I have been a technician with BTS for seventeen years. I became a union steward fifteen years ago and always fought for your rights in the best way that I knew how.

I hope you all recognize this.

It has been the Honour and privilege of my career to have been able to serve all of you for these many years. We have come a long way together. We have fought the good fight together. We have shared in laughter and in mourned in sorrow together. We have climbed seemingly unsurpassable mountains together and have occasionally been disappointed together but through it all you always supported me as I hope you know that I supported you.

I want you all to understand that this is not goodbye. I intend to assist the Executive team and members in any way I can, in whatever role is needed, as I always have once I return to work. This is not a goodbye but more of a "See you when I am better".

Again, thank you all for your many years of support you have shown me and please let us all continue to support this strong knowledgeable and diligent Executive Team of Local 1996-O.

Sanjay Singh

Vice President Local 1996-O