

My name is Brigitte Benoit and I have accepted this executive nomination within CUPE 4070. I have been a Westjet Cabin Crew Member for 12 years. I am based in Calgary but I live and commute from Regina. My career at Westjet started in 2006, shortly after graduating the University of Regina with a BA in Psychology.

In 2010, four years into my flying career, I returned to the University to pursue a second undergraduate degree. I attended classes three days a week and maintained a full-time flying schedule. I graduated with distinction in early 2013 with a BA in Sociology, and was accepted into the Masters program in Social Studies. I deferred my thesis acceptance for a year because I was seriously considering going to Law school. I prepared for the LSAT, wrote the exam but canceled my scores. Instead, I began my thesis work late 2014.

During that time, I started working as a teaching assistant and seminar facilitator in the Sociology/Social Studies department and Women and Gender Studies department at the University of Regina. I was an active teaching assistant throughout my studies, marking and preparing seminar lectures for a variety of courses. I also had the opportunity to assist in the development of a critical theory course on diversity in the department of Kinesiology and Health Studies - a course I am still actively involved in today.

As my thesis work progressed, I was invited to present my research at the University of Calgary during Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences in 2016. My thesis work centres female identity and the socially constructed concept of motherhood. I worked specifically with women who experienced infertility. My work involves critically analyzing and interpreting discourse; I study how language influences our understanding of the things around us and the impact of the interpretation(s) of that language. I hope to defend my thesis early 2019.

My passion for language and maintaining its integrity, both in interpretation and implementation has fuelled my candid attitude. I have been strongly outspoken about a number of past and present issues including, the closure of ports, rising commuting costs, errors on the IDL and the current reserve system. When the opportunity arose to align myself with a membership that exerts real legal ability - a check and balance per se - I was all in. During the certification drive, I was a straightforward and honest activist. Currently, I am listed as one of YYC's CUPE Interim Stewards. For me, it is important to provide CCMs with correct and trustworthy information. I encourage every CCM I work with to refresh themselves on our CCA and read all policies that impact Inflight - knowledge is power but accurate knowledge is influential!

I know CCMs are frustrated with the ambiguity of the language in the CCA - ambiguity is pernicious and we are now just feeling its effects. Moving forward, I want our first collective agreement to reflect the clear and explicit language of our CCMs; the proverbial loopholes closed, no more 'grey' areas. Westjet Cabin Crew Members want reasonable and fair work rules that are equal and legitimate. We want real accountability and transparency. We don't just want "industry standard" we want to BE the standard - let's take care of ourselves; we deserve it!