

## **Katia Lelièvre**

**President of the SEE des employé(e)s de magasins et de bureaux de la SAQ–CSN**

**Candidate for the position of 3<sup>rd</sup> vice-president of the CSN**



### **Union career**

2008-2015 and 2018-2020

- President, Syndicat des employé(e)s de magasins et de bureaux de la SAQ

2006-2008 and 2016-2018

- Vice-President, Mobilization, Union Life and Information, SEMB-SAQ CSN

2004 to 2006

- Regional delegate for Laval-Rive Nord, SEMB-SAQ CSN

Since 2013

- Member of the Federal Bureau of the FEESP

2013-2018

- Chair of the FEESP Training Committee

Since 2018

- President, Public Agencies Sector, FEESP

Since 2013

- Delegate to the Confederal Council

2015

- At my federation (the FEESP), I served as a member of the committee on questions of privilege; I organized and provided training for new delegates and organized the annual trainers' meetings on many occasions; and I served on the committee on compensation for elected officials.

1998-2008

- Chair of the Board of Directors of the Maison de la famille Bois-des-Filion

Hi, Everybody,

My name is Katia Lelièvre, and I'm the President of the Syndicat des employé(e)s de magasins et de bureaux de la SAQ.

I began my involvement as an activist in 1997 at the Maison de la Famille Bois-des-Filion, an agency in my community that was about to close its doors. I joined forces with the other women who participated in the activities at this agency, and together we succeeded in maintaining its services and securing adequate space and recurrent funding. This was when I learned that with courage, conviction and hard work, a group of people who would not seem to have the knowledge or skills for the job can combine their strengths and achieve unexpected results.

My love for the CSN is what decided me to run for Third Vice-President. My union returned to the CSN in 2005, right in the middle of a strike. We were disorganized and short on resources, and the central councils gave us the solidarity and the teams that we needed to support us in our long struggle. I immediately had a profound feeling of attachment and belonging to the movement, which greeted us with open arms and supported us during this very difficult period.

At that time, I served as regional delegate for Laval, Laurentides Sud and part of Lanaudière. In 2006, I was elected to my union executive as Vice-President, Mobilization, Union Life and Information. Two years later, I was elected President.

I have a deep love for the CSN, and that's why I think it's so important for our confederation to remain as militant as possible. We must be bold, we must innovate, we must smash down barriers and show our courage. I plan to work with all components of the movement to develop strategies that will have a strong impact on our employers and political decision-makers. Together we can be creative and achieve a mobilization that will help our movement spread even further.

Communication is the key to solidarity. I therefore plan to communicate more, better, dynamically and transparently. Whether we're talking with one another or with the media, we should use simple, effective language, and I mean all the time: we have to trust people's intelligence. When we explain the struggles, conflicts and issues to them clearly, they can start to think about them carefully. And that too takes courage, because communication has to be a two-way street, and we must therefore listen to the criticisms, analyze them, and then adjust to the will of the majority. Sometimes things can get confrontational, but that is very necessary if we want the CSN to reflect its members faithfully. The CSN does not take enough advantage of social media, videos and direct dialogue as ways of communicating with its members. We have to update our ways of dialoguing with our members and not wait to get things perfect before we speak, because if we do, then the silences will be too long.

It is when employees, activists, federations, central councils, and, of course, unions work together that it becomes possible for us to win. Marcel Pépin said it best: it's not enough to be right, you must also have the strength to be right. And we get this strength from this co-operation and solidarity and the mobilization that results from them. It's time to set our differences aside, look to the future, and together make the CSN bigger, stronger, more militant and more innovative.

We must also pick our battles more carefully, define their objectives, and then apply all of the resources and energy needed to achieve them. It's hard for local unions to understand exactly what's at stake in every single campaign that the CSN conducts and to mobilize support every time. That's why we have to prioritize. To do so, we must democratize our debates so that the true priorities of the CSN's members can emerge.

I am convinced that if we commit to militancy, communication, and co-operation and choose our battles more wisely, we will win many victories that will benefit society as a whole. And we must trumpet our victories more loudly, so that people know that we are the confederation for winners. Workers who aren't unionized or who belong to non-CSN unions will want to join our ranks, thus increasing our collective fighting strength and power.

I therefore humbly ask for your support. I promise to make the CSN Executive aware of the concerns and ideas of the local unions and of all the regions of Québec. Let's start today to prepare for our victories of tomorrow.

Solidarity!

Katia Lelièvre