

**Annual Report 2019**  
**National Holodomor Education Committee (NHEC)**  
**of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress (UCC)**

**Submitted by NHEC Chair:** Valentina Kuryliw

**Committee Members:**

**Quebec:** Zorianna Luhovy  
**Ontario:** Lydia Falcomer, Oksana Levytsky, Sophia Isajiw, Tamara Kowalczyk  
**Manitoba:** Val Noseworthy, Irka Balan  
**Saskatchewan:** Nadia Prokopchuk  
**Alberta:** Natalia Onyschuk, Boris Radyo  
**British Columbia:** Lydia Huzyk

***“Awareness and Action Through Education”***

***NHEC works***

***with local UCC***

***Branches to include the Holodomor in provincial curricula across Canada, and on  
Holodomor activities related to education.***

This year we celebrate a milestone anniversary for this committee!

In the past decade that this committee has been working together, the amount of awareness about the Holodomor and its significance has been raised tremendously across Canada. The inclusion of the Holodomor in curricula across Canada is a major accomplishment of this committee. Each of the committee members has contributed greatly in including the Holodomor in curricula in their respective provinces, especially in Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. This has not been an easy feat to accomplish. It has been a slow and steady task of constant advocacy, networking, educating Ministers of Education and their staff, school boards and teachers and creating resources and teaching materials. Resources on the Holodomor have additionally been developed for individual provinces, including in Quebec with films developed in 3 languages including French and Ukrainian. And recent recognition of the Holodomor as genocide and of Holodomor Memorial Day in British Columbia are the first steps in the inclusion of the Holodomor in curricula within that province. So, we have a lot to stand proud of as a result of our accomplishments in over a decade from 2009-2020. I want to thank this committee for always pulling together to help each other out, for sharing resources developed and individual expertise across all provinces so that we always united into a cross-Canada network, and for all of the committed hard work of the past decade. Without your commitment none of these gains would have been possible. I look forward to the next decade of working with you.

**Brief reports from across Canada:**

The following provinces have submitted a separate report on their activities (each is attached):

Quebec, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, Ontario (this report is included in the overview report for NHEC by V. Kuryliw).

### **Curriculum Update:**

Manitoba is considering revising its curriculum. Saskatchewan is going through a curriculum revision now, as is Alberta. Plans to revisit the question of curriculum updates will be addressed in the new year to see what needs to be changed.

### **UCC Website:**

It is difficult as National Chair to have 2 websites to update regularly (UCC's and HREC's – the Holodomor Research and Education Consortium of which V. Kuryliw is the Director of Education).. Therefore, NHEC is requesting that UCC staff place an announcement on the NHEC webpages directing all users to visit the HREC Education website where updated resource lists, educational materials, Holodomor educational events and other basic information about the Holodomor and its teaching, are up to date and can be easily accessed. URL:

[www.education.holodomor.ca](http://www.education.holodomor.ca)

### **V. Kuryliw's *Holodomor in Ukraine* Book Launches:**

A very big and warm thank you to all the UCC Branches and their executives for supporting and helping to organize book launches, and for advertising the launches in their respective cities, for V. Kuryliw's *Holodomor in Ukraine, the Genocidal Famine 1932-1933: Learning Materials for Teachers and Students*. As a result of these successful book launches and other efforts, to date, **1,000 of these books have now been distributed** nationally and internationally.

The book launches this year were held in the fall of 2019 in Montreal and Ottawa, in Winnipeg, Edmonton and in Saskatoon.

The **Montreal, Quebec** book launch took place at St. Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Sobor on 3 March 2019 and was organized by the Québec Provincial Council of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress and its Montreal Branch, headed by the **Right Rev. Dr. Ihor Kutash**. **Dr. Alexander Melnyk**, Church Council Vice Chair of St. Mary the Protectress Ukrainian Orthodox Church, where Kuryliw grew up, delivered a brief biography of the author. The presentation was followed by a question and answer period with light refreshments.

Attended by educators and community leaders, the book launch in **Ottawa, Ontario** on 4 March 2019 was hosted by the UCC – National Ukrainian Canadian Congress with special thanks to **Ihor Michalchyshyn** for his help in organizing the event held at the Buduchnist Credit Union building and was co-hosted by UNF, the Ukrainian National Federation of Ottawa-Gatineau and the Ukrainian Canadian Professional and Business Association. (For Montreal and Ottawa book launches, see article: <https://education.holodomor.ca/montreal-and-ottawa-host-book-launches-for-holodomor-in-ukraine/>)

In **Winnipeg, Manitoba**, the book launch was held on 22 May 2019, just prior to the National Ukrainian Teacher's Conference (NUTC). It was hosted by the Canadian Museum for Human Rights (CMHR), the Manitoba Provincial Council and the Holodomor Awareness and Education Committee of UCC–Manitoba. Some 80 attendees were present, among them community leaders, teachers, and 2 Holodomor survivors, **Luba Semaniuk** and **Zena Dlugosz**, from the Winnipeg community. **Dr. John Young** (CMHR CEO) gave the opening remarks. **Metropolitan Yuriy Kalistchuk** (Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada) spoke as a friend of the author. Kuryliw was interviewed about her motivation for writing the book on CBC prior to the event.

(For Winnipeg book launch see articles: <https://education.holodomor.ca/canadian-museum-for-human-rights-hosts-book-launch-in-winnipeg-for-kuryliws-holodomor-in-ukraine/> and CMHR website: <https://humanrights.ca/event/book-launch-holodomor-in-ukraine-the-genocidal-famine-1932-1933>)

Kuryliw's book launch in **Edmonton, Alberta** on 26 September 2019 gathered an audience of social studies teachers, academics from the University of Alberta and MacEwan University, **Oleksandr Danileyko** (Consul General of Ukraine in Edmonton), schoolteachers and members and leaders of the Ukrainian community. As a result of this book launch, 93 books were purchased for the Edmonton Catholic School District. This book launch was sponsored by HREC and co-sponsored by the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies (CIUS), the Ukrainian Language and Education Centre (ULEC) at the University of Alberta, and the UCC Alberta Provincial Council.

(See CIUS web announcement: <https://www.ualberta.ca/canadian-institute-of-ukrainian-studies/news-and-events/seminars/2019/september/book-launch>)

In **Saskatoon, Saskatchewan** the book launch took place at the McNally Robinson Booksellers on 16 October 2019. It was hosted by the Ukrainian Canadian Congress–Saskatchewan Provincial Council and sponsored by the University of Saskatchewan Ukrainian Students' Association and the Saskatchewan Teachers of Ukrainian. Special thanks to **Nadia Prokopchuk** for helping to organize this event.

(See UCC-SK *Visnyk* announcement, p. 13: <https://www.ucc.sk.ca/oldsite/pdf/visnykv33no3.pdf>)

## **Workshops and Presentations:**

### **Holodomor Forum, Curriculum Panel in Philadelphia, PA on 5 October 2019:**

NHEC Chair, V. Kuryliw, was invited to present at the Philadelphia Holodomor Forum on their *Curriculum Panel* with four other speakers. In her presentation, she emphasized and outlined the strategies and approaches that NHEC has used to include the Holodomor in curricula across Canada. The Holodomor Forum was sponsored by the U.S. Committee for Ukrainian Holodomor-Genocide Awareness and was the first such effort on the Holodomor in the USA.

(See *Ukrainian Weekly* article:

<http://www.ukrweekly.com/uw/wp/former-u-s-rep-sander-levin-honored-for-his-long-time-support-of-holodomor-issues/>)

### **“Food as A Weapon: A Workshop Examining the Holodomor in Ukraine as A Case Study” at the Faculty of Education, University of Alberta, Edmonton on 25 September 2019:**

V. Kuryliw conducted a professional development workshop using interactive teaching methods for social studies teachers, graduate students, undergraduate majors and minors and social studies consultants in the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta. Most attendees were unfamiliar with the Holodomor and showed a lot of interest in the interactive lesson and use of a variety of primary resources. Educators present received a package of handouts for their use in the classroom. One of the student teacher participants of this workshop commented on it for ULEC's newsletter: *"For many workshop participants, it was the first time they had heard about the Holodomor and they valued the approach used by the author in her book to teach about genocide. 'The teaching approach used – i.e.: splitting students into groups, examining different documents, memoirs, photographs and reporting on discoveries – is a really effective way to teach history. Kids like an investigation, and before you know, they learn things.'"* The workshop was organized by **Dr. Olena Bilash**, Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta and the Ukrainian Language Education Centre (ULEC) at CIUS, University of Alberta and supported by HREC (Holodomor Research and Education Consortium, at CIUS, University of Alberta).

**"Genocide: Then and Now" Social Studies Saskatchewan Conference in Moose Jaw, SK on the 17-19 October 2019:**

NHEC Chair V. Kuryliw was the keynote speaker at the opening session of the Social Studies teachers' conference which examined genocides of the 20th century (the Holodomor, the Holocaust, Armenia, Rwanda, Cambodia) and the 21st century (Myanmar, Burundi, South Sudan, and Iraq) as well as the First Nations' experiences. In her keynote, Kuryliw stressed the importance of teaching students to recognize the steps by which genocide evolves and demonstrated its evolution through the Holodomor. Resources for teachers were also discussed. The keynote concluded with how to foster responsible global citizens so that students feel empowered to recognize and speak out to halt the first signs of human rights abuse.

(See Regina Leader-Post article describing the keynote speech: <https://leaderpost.com/sponsored/news-sponsored/holodomor-education-a-tool-to-combat-increasing-divisiveness-and-hatred> and Conference schedule: <https://sss.ourconference.ca/index.php?Page=Schedule>)

**National Ukrainian Teachers Conference (NUTC) at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights (CMHR) in Winnipeg, MB on 24-25 May 2019:**

Valentina Kuryliw was invited to do 2 presentations during this conference organized by the National Ukrainian Education Committee of the UCC, Chaired by **Oksana Levytsky**. The first presentation was on educational resources for teaching the Holodomor including her book, *Holodomor in Ukraine*, and how these could be used in the classroom. The second talk was aboard the Holodomor Mobile Classroom (HMC) RV where she detailed the teaching methods and strategies used in her inaugural lesson aboard the HMC and the primary sources and other resources selected for it. Both workshops were very well received, with a lively discussion, praise and thanks afterwards. Educators who attended received a package of handouts for use in their classrooms.

(See Regina Leader-Post article: [https://leaderpost.com/news/local-news/teacher-conference-to-bring-conversations-of-genocide-to-the-classroom?fbclid=IwAR25zte6UtmW3ewGZy-bSvLMbiubvAmvLU7rNr1KSReI5HrYY8-Lm\\_GRIIA](https://leaderpost.com/news/local-news/teacher-conference-to-bring-conversations-of-genocide-to-the-classroom?fbclid=IwAR25zte6UtmW3ewGZy-bSvLMbiubvAmvLU7rNr1KSReI5HrYY8-Lm_GRIIA))

**“Human Rights and Holodomor Education” panel presentation at the UCC XXVI Triennial Congress in Ottawa on 2 November 2019:**

Kuryliw presented at the UCC Triennial Congress on a panel with four other speakers, #13 Workshop Session B (2): **Human Rights – An International and Canadian Perspective**. Her talk emphasized the importance of teaching about human rights and democratic values and the stages of human rights abuses leading to genocide, using the Holodomor as an example. The audience was very interested in the topic and asked in-depth questions concerning human rights and the Holodomor.

**Accepted Educational Partner of the Toronto District School Board (TDSB):**

In 2019, HREC Education started the application process and in January of 2020 entered into an official **Educational Programming Partnership agreement** with the **Toronto District School Board (TDSB)** by special invitation of the TDSB Director of Education. The partnership greatly expands the reach for promotion and distribution of teaching materials about the Holodomor and increases opportunities for direct access to teaching TDSB students and their teachers. This can serve as an example and model of what can be done as a community organization in other parts of Canada in different school boards across the country to encourage the teaching of the Holodomor locally.

**Contact with Provincial Ministers of Education Across Canada in 2019:**

Complimentary copies of the book *Holodomor in Ukraine* were sent to each Minister of Education (for the 10 provinces and 3 territories) to share with their staff, and to vet as a resource to be used and distributed through their Ministry’s resource information. All provinces were asked for actionable items. Quebec, NS, NB, PEI and NFLD & Labrador were asked to include the Holodomor in their provincial curricula and to consider creating a Holodomor Memorial Day in their province. The other provinces that have already included the Holodomor in their curriculum (AB, SK, MB, ON and BC), were reminded of the necessity to keep the Holodomor as a topic to teach during successive revisions to their curricula, and to expand its inclusion to a wider number of subjects being taught. Responses to these letters were received from five of the Ministers of Education: Ontario, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, British Columbia and Quebec. The letters informed us that they would be sharing the *Holodomor in Ukraine* resource with their provincial social studies teacher associations, and that the Ministry would encourage them to share it with their teachers in their respective provinces.

(See article: <https://education.holodomor.ca/ministers-of-education-from-british-columbia-saskatchewan-and-manitoba-respond-to-the-national-holodomor-education-committee-chair-of-the-ukrainian-canadian-congress/>)

**Outreach to Ministry of Education, British Columbia:**

The Chair of NHEC was in contact with the **UCC Provincial Council–British Columbia**, providing them with information, suggestions and teaching materials for approaching the BC Ministry of Education and school boards about continuing to include and promote the Holodomor in their curriculum, and to help bring about recognition of the Holodomor in BC. A follow-up meeting with Ministry of Education staff in BC is being planned. Kuryliw approached **BC Green Party leader Andrew Weaver** with information on the Holodomor and sent him a complimentary copy of her *Holodomor in Ukraine* book. She included a letter relating that she knew his

grandparents who had lived through the Holodomor. A meeting was set for 12 February at the BC Legislature in Victoria, which subsequently had to be cancelled due to bad weather. On 31 October 2019, **Bill M225 on Holodomor Recognition** was passed. Plans for Ministry of Education staff to meet with UCC Provincial Council of BC and Valentina Kuryliw are being discussed for September 2020.

(See articles: <https://ucc.ca/2019/10/30/british-columbia-adopts-holodomor-memorial-act/> and <http://www.andrewweavermla.ca/2019/10/23/holodomor-1st/>)

### **Holodomor denial incident at the University of Edmonton in Alberta:**

As regards responses to the issue of Holodomor denial made on the personal social media account of a Faculty member at the University of Edmonton in 2019, I would like to thank **Nadia Prokopchuk** and her academic colleague Jay Wilson for writing an excellent article on academic integrity which spoke to this issue. Their letter, “Universities should stand up for integrity and public trust in university teaching” (14 January 2020) to Leslie Cormack, former Dean of the Faculty of Arts at the University of Alberta was exactly what was needed to address issues concerning Canadian values, human rights, their abuse and the Holodomor genocide. CIUS (the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies) sent letters to the university, as did the UCC, UCRDC, and V. Kuryliw, who sent her own letter and concerns as the Chair of the NHEC.

## **NATIONAL HOLODOMOR EDUCATION COMMITTEE FUTURE PLANS, 2020-2021**

### **1. Curriculum Updates:**

The NHEC Chair will be requesting any curricular updates from the various provinces in the Fall/Winter of 2020-2021.

### **2. Contacting Maritime Ministries of Education:**

NHEC Chair V. Kuryliw will be contacting Ministries of Education of the Maritime Provinces with the aim of recognition of the Holodomor in each province and including the topic of the Holodomor in the provincial curriculum. This also requires contacting the respective UCC provincial representatives to work together on this important advocacy initiative.

### **3. Book Launches for V. Kuryliw's *Holodomor in Ukraine* publication are being planned for Vancouver, New York City, Seattle and possibly other cities. In Canada, the UCC-BC Provincial Council will be approached help to organize a launch locally in the Fall or early Winter of 2020.**

### **4. Publications:**

- V. Kuryliw's *Holodomor in Ukraine* book is being translated and will be published by HREC Press in Ukraine in the early winter of 2020-2021.
- V. Kuryliw's "The Historian's Craft" lesson is being published in English and in Ukrainian and will be translated into French in 2020. It is a sample lesson plan for teaching the Holodomor modelling engaging teaching practices using a variety of resources and will be easily available for teachers.

### **5. Workshops:**

As an initiative of the **Faculty of Education and Ukrainian Language Education Center (ULEC) at the University of Alberta**, a half-day workshop for Social Studies teachers from the Edmonton Catholic and public school districts will be held to promote the teaching of the Holodomor in the Alberta curriculum using current methodology and technology. Emphasis will be made on recent research materials and methodologies for teaching human rights, genocide and the Holodomor. Included will be a session on specific resources that are suitable for educators for teaching the Holodomor, with an opportunity for teachers to reflect and provide feedback.

### **6. Teacher Training Workshop:**

In relation to the TDSB Partnership, NHEC will run a special workshop in Toronto for educators/volunteers interested in teaching about the Holodomor through a prepared presentation to classes of students at the TDSB using a specially-developed PowerPoint and lesson plan created by V. Kuryliw.

7. **Holodomor Memorial Day Pamphlet:**

A fully updated Holodomor Memorial Day Pamphlet will be completed once more this year and will be sent out to all representatives of NHEC across Canada for distribution within their provinces in September. It will also be downloadable from HREC Education's website and can be distributed electronically to school boards and educators in the various provinces. Hard copies of the pamphlet will also be available for distribution upon request from V. Kuryliw or Sophia Isajiw. The pamphlet is an annual initiative that provides basic information on the Holodomor, an announcement for schools, as well as lists of resources for educators and community leaders to commemorate the Holodomor. Holodomor Memorial Day is held in schools on the 4<sup>th</sup> Friday in November and this year it will be on 27 November, 2020.

8. **Mr. Jones film premiere update:**

Because of the coronavirus, the Canadian premier for the film *Mr. Jones* (about Gareth Jones and the Holodomor) has been postponed until the Fall and Winter of 2020. Members of NHEC and their respective Provincial Councils will be asked to help consult on the best locations and marketing/advertisement for the film. The distributor is looking for community access, hosting receptions, and help with marketing the event. NHEC Chair, V. Kuryliw, will be the liaison with the distributor and will provide Provincial and Committee representatives with information as the dates are set for the chosen cities, Toronto, Winnipeg, Edmonton and Vancouver.

9. **Inclusion of the term 'Holodomor' in Dictionaries:**

An initiative to include the term 'Holodomor' in Dictionaries will be undertaken by Ontario Committee member **Lydia Falcomer** during the coming year.

**10. Resolution** to have the Holodomor acknowledged and commemorated in schools across Canada announcing a specific date during **April Genocide Month** was endorsed by the NHEC last fall but was not passed by the Triennial XXVI Congress in November. This year it is crucial that the NHEC initiative is addressed by the UCC Executive Council to bring awareness and the teaching of the Holodomor to the attention of educators once more. Other genocides have additional days of commemoration throughout the school year to acknowledge their genocide. We should not miss out on this opportunity to be part of this event.