



# UNISON SCOTLAND YOUNG MEMBERS NEWSLETTER

Summer 2016

Hello and welcome to your new Scottish Young Members Committee newsletter. Here you'll find all the contact details needed to get involved, as well as campaign news, training opportunities and updates on young member activity both in Scotland and across the UK.

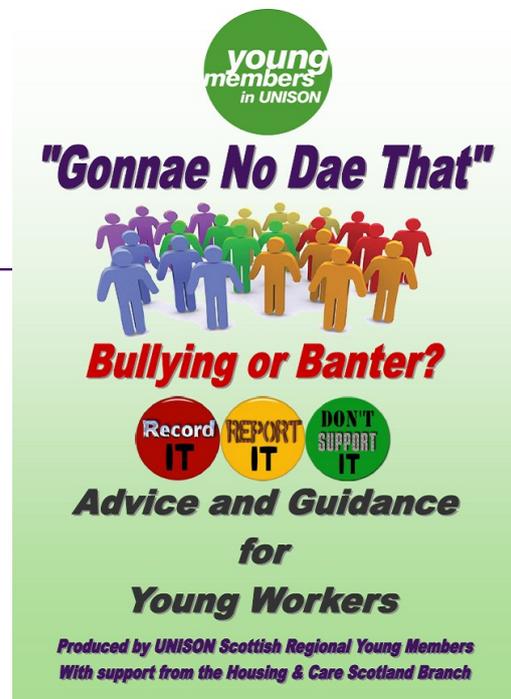
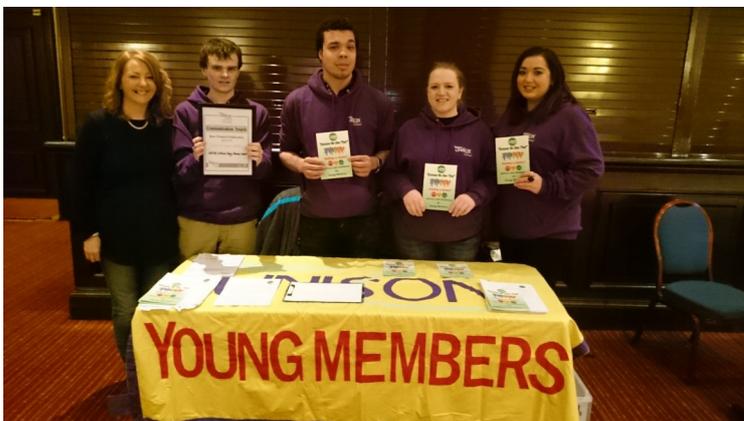
## Our award winning campaign against Bullying & Harassment

UNISON Young Members launched their award winning Bullying & Harassment Guide at Scottish Council in February. It is part of a wider campaign to help young members understand what bullying and harassment is, how you can recognise it and how UNISON can help when it occurs. After undertaking a survey of its young members, we found shocking numbers of young people are still being bullied in the workplace, despite the policies and laws that should protect them.

Wendy Hudson, Lead Officer, said "Bullying and Harassment are unacceptable, the law makes that clear. Employers are

responsible for creating and maintaining a safe workplace, free from bullying, intimidation and harassment where employees are protected." Bullying can affect everyone and those people who suffer at the hands of bullies can experience both negative physical and mental health issues. Our survey showed that 38% of young members experienced problems such as, depression, anxiety, headaches, stomach aches, decreased productivity, and in some cases, thoughts or attempts at suicide. The campaign has been given overwhelming

support by branches who voted to distribute the guide to young members across Scotland. If you have witnessed or experienced some of these issues then please don't hesitate to seek more information and contact your branch for advice. You can also email [w.hudson@unison.co.uk](mailto:w.hudson@unison.co.uk) for further information and a copy of the guide. Cont. Page 2...



# NEXT STEPS

- Continue to distribute guide to all young members
- Information Posters and Postcards for workplaces
- Awareness Video— YouTube
- Social Media and Website updates
- Motions to various regional & national conferences
- STUC Support including “Unions into Schools” Project



## Young Members take Campaign to Dundee Schools

By Andrew Crosbie

On Tuesday 19th April, myself and Ryan Boyle, attended an STUC Unions into Schools young persons' fringe event, at the STUC Annual Congress in Dundee.

Four schools participated in the event, Baldrigon Academy, Harris Academy, Forfar Academy, Woodmill High. Pupils from three of the schools delivered presentations on 3 major issues affecting them in their daily lives:

- The Living Wage, Votes for 16 and 17 year olds, and Bullying and Harassment

Pupils received a copy of the Scottish Young Members bullying guide and as part of our campaign, and we have been in discussions with the STUC's Union's into Schools initiative looking for ways to help and get involved. We decided to seek support in this area as the majority of cases raised in the committee's survey, raised concerns that a number of young people didn't know what bullying and harassment was.

Together with colleagues at the STUC, we soon hope to finalise a section on tackling bullying and harassment within the school and workplace, to be used as part of the STUC's Unions into Schools pack, to be delivered next school term.

As a committee, we will be undertaking training provided by the STUC on 13th August, to enable us to visit schools across the country to talk to pupils about a variety of issues,



including the importance of joining a trade union.

If you are interested in this training or getting more involved in the campaign, contact

contact

w.hudson@unison.co.uk or call

# 0141 342 2845

# How the Union made me a better Youth Worker



I'm Courteney Affleck and I am a Modern Apprentice Youth Worker for North Ayrshire Council. I am undertaking an SVQ Level 3 in Youth Work and to do this I work with young people aged 11-25 on a regular basis. I have worked at Girls Groups, Boys Groups, Local Youth Action Forums, Youth Councils and on Joint Cabinets, as well as doing work on behalf of UNICEF alongside the Children and Young Persons Commissioner for Scotland.

I was 16 when I took up this post and although the majority of my time was wonderful and empowering, there were times where I was scared, worried, stressed and flat out confused. When working with vulnerable groups I feel that it is important that you fully understand your rights and responsibilities and that's when I found out about UNISON.

I signed up, and shortly afterwards I was nominated to be the Young Persons Officer for the North Ayrshire Branch. I was happy to do this role as I felt that there was a gap in my area, and other young staff needed to know what was going on.

As the Young Persons Officer it is my role to recruit new young members and relay information between the Branch, the Union, and the other young members I work alongside. During this time I have managed to convince 9 other modern apprentices to join UNISON and based on their feedback they're glad that they did. I have also encouraged them to get involved with UNISON. I feel that trade union involvement links well with youth work as I am now more aware of different issues like the Equality and Discrimination Act, which makes it easier to deal with bullying in young people. I would encourage anyone who's would like to get involved to step forward, and I am happy to offer support to anyone who needs it.

When looking at becoming more involved in your branch I would say yes, look at what others are doing and have done in the past but you should also seriously believe in your own abilities and develop your own way of working, that's the best way to make a difference - be different!

In the current climate of cuts in the public sector, you may find yourself being moved to a trust, having your pay cut or having hours changed and an array of different issues but it is important that you know your rights, remember your rights and stand up for your rights.

In conclusion, I feel that being involved with UNISON has bettered me as a youth worker as I am now even more compassionate, understanding and empowered than I ever was before and I am grateful for the opportunity to the young persons officer.

By Courtenay Affleck

"I am now even more compassionate, understanding & empowered."

"There were times when I was scared, worried, stressed and flat out confused."

## Unison's Scottish Council backs campaign to tackle homophobic bullying in Scottish Schools



UNISON's Scottish Council recently supported a motion regarding the TIE Campaign (Time for Inclusive Education). It was founded by Jordan Daly and Liam Stevenson and aims to teach LGBT issues in Scottish Schools.

Research by the charity Stonewall revealed that a worrying 69% of Lesbian, Gay & Bisexual pupils and 77% of transgender pupils in schools in Scotland have experienced bullying at school. Of

those, 26% have attempted suicide as a result, while 54% are regularly self harming.

UNISON has supported the campaign by donating £1,000 towards the cost of sending teachers on training about LGBT issues, given that 53% of LGBT pupils don't feel they have an adult in the school they can discuss issues with. The campaign aims to change this by sending teachers on training and setting up equality groups in schools.

The campaign is continually looking for stories of those affected by homophobic bullying during their time at school, whether as a victim or a witness. If you have a story you would like to share please email [stories@tiecampaign.co.uk](mailto:stories@tiecampaign.co.uk).

This is something that young members are keen to support, if you can help in any way please do! We will keep you posted on any further work UNISON is undertaking to help tackle this issue!

**26% of LGBT Pupils surveyed have attempted suicide as a result of bullying at school**



UNISON have been campaigning on Votes for 16 and 17 year olds across the UK.

We have had some success in this area already, when last year the Scottish Parliament passed a bill to allow 16/17 year olds to vote in all Scottish Parliament and in Scottish Local Authority elections.

Despite this success of allowing 16/17 year olds living in Scotland to vote in Scottish Parliamentary/Local council elections, they cannot vote at present in UK General Elections and EU elections.

A small number of countries already allow votes at 16 including Brazil, Austria, the Channel Islands and Germany, and we believe this should be the same for all 16/17 year olds across the UK.

For more updates on the campaign or how you can get involved, please follow the Young Members on:

[www.facebook.com/unionscot](http://www.facebook.com/unionscot)

# !VIVA CUBA!

By Bernadette Lafferty



I was one of 28 Young Trade Unionists from across the British trade union movement who visited Cuba on the 2016 Young Trade Unionists May Day Brigade, organised by Cuba Solidarity Campaign (CSC). Myself and fellow committee members, Simon Stuart, David Fernie and our Regional Lead, Wendy Hudson, joined 240 trade unionists and political activists from around the world in a programme of solidarity work, political, educational and cultural visits. Delegates were also international guests at the May Day rally in Havana and the International Solidarity with Cuba Conference on May 2.



We also took part in agricultural work, which included clearing land, cutting grass, weeding, lifting and cleaning which gave a first-hand insight to the struggle of life in Cuba under the ongoing US blockade, which denies the Cubans access to basic machinery and goods. Transport to the farms was in the back of open-top trucks or trailers on tractors and cutting grass was done by hand with machetes; manifestations of a lack

of access of resources due to the blockade.

Amongst the packed itinerary there was some free time for fun and relaxation. Many walked to the local village near the camp where they could practice their Spanish with locals by ordering food and drinks and talk politics, other visits including trips to the local beaches and the legendary Tropicana club in Havana.

Visiting Cuba with the CSC has been the most amazing experience of my life. It is inspiring to see how strong the Cuban people are and how they get by with the limitations from the blockade. The most important thing that I have taken from this trip is that the people of Cuba still need our help and solidarity to end the blockade as people think that since Obama visited, this meant it was over. The blockade is unfair and unjust and has to stop! The people of Cuba need our help! VIVA CUBA! For more information please visit the CSC website:



[www.cuba-solidarity.org.uk](http://www.cuba-solidarity.org.uk)

# MEET THE TEAM!



**DEBBIE CRAWFORD, AGE 25**  
**LEISURE ASSISTANT**  
**ANGUS COUNCIL BRANCH**

I first joined UNISON in 2011 as I wanted to be protected in my workplace and get the benefits of being a member. After a situation where I had to get the union involved at work I got more interested and involved in the union because it was a good and positive experience. As a young member it's easy to get involved. There is plenty of opportunity to go on various courses and things like the young members' regional conference weekend, which was a great first experience for me. I learned what UNISON can do and thought about where I wanted to go from there. After my first conference with the young members' group I wanted to become my Branch's Young Members' Officer, then do my training to become a workplace steward in the future.

## CONTACT US

**0800 0 857 857**

**MATT ELLIS, AGE 25**  
**NURSING ASSISTANT**  
**NHS GRAMPIAN BRANCH**



My name is Matt Ellis, I work as a Nursing Assistant in NHSG, and I am Young Members officer for Grampian Health Branch of Unison based in Aberdeen. I'm also a union steward and health and safety rep. I got involved with Unison as I wanted to make a difference in my workplace and give a young, male perspective on issues. I also wanted to find out how the policies and procedures of the NHS affected me as a worker. I have attended Scottish and National Young Member's weekends for the past three years, National Delegate Conference two years running, and attended the STUC Youth Committee conference, on which I sit on the Youth Committee. I've been taking advantage of UNISON's free training programme and once I'm a bit more experienced I'm looking to doing the employment law course, and perhaps take up another officers post in my branch. In my spare time I enjoy socialising, reading, being sarcastic and entering Lionel Ritchie lookalike contests! This year I'm also the Scottish Young Members delegate to National Delegates conference. Part of my role is to encourage young members from Scotland that are attending to participate and become active at conference, whether it's attending the stalls or young members events, getting on stage to make a speech supporting a motion, I can help with that. If anyone would like more information feel free to contact me on my email at [matthew.ellis7@nhs.net](mailto:matthew.ellis7@nhs.net)



**MATTHEW MARTIN**  
**SCOTTISH WATER BRANCH**

I attended Herriot Watt university where I studied Molecular Biology and I now work for Scottish water in the Cryptosporidium lab. I joined UNISON in September 2015 and since then have gotten involved with the young members in UNISON groups and committees. I hope to get more involved with the young members committee and become more involved in the union as a whole. I recently attended the Young Members Conference in Leicester where I took part in workshops that helped me develop an understanding of what workplaces UNISON encompasses. I also took part in the street campaign gathering signatures for a petition in support of the real living wage.



**KATRINA RANKIN, AGE 23**  
**BUSINESS SUPPORT ASSISTANT**  
**EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL BRANCH**

Hello, my name is Katrina Rankin and I am the young members officer of the East Renfrewshire Branch and also a workplace steward. I became active within Unison in 2012 as a Modern Apprentice and the reason I joined was to make more of a presence within my workplace and highlight issues specific to young people. In general I just wanted to find out more about the trade union movement! Soon after joining I attend my first Scottish Young Members Committee weekend and have been hooked ever since! I continue to learn

more each and every day. I've been given so many fantastic opportunities being an activist including attending recruitment stalls, being part of a delegation to go to CUBA, attend National Delegate Conference in Brighton. I am currently Chair of the Scottish Young Members Committee and have worked hard to rebuild our committee which is growing from strength to strength. I am also the representative for Scotland on the National Young Members Forum which has been an amazing opportunity. Although I'm an active young member, I have not yet done much representation, however this is my goal for the year which is to come out my comfort zone and become a more active steward in my branch. In my spare time I enjoy watching box sets, reading, going to watch football games, socialising and being out and about finding new fun things to do (and just not quite growing up yet!) If you want to find out more you can drop me an email at [ymunisoner@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:ymunisoner@yahoo.co.uk)

**DANIELLE ROWLEY, AGE 26**  
**CAMPAIGNS & PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER**  
**EDINBURGH CITY BRANCH**

I work the third sector and recently joined UNISON and became my branch's Young Members' Officer. I've always been involved in campaigning and politics and look forward to taking part in the campaigns as a young member. Young members are the future of our movement and I think it's crucial to build a strong workforce of members that can keep our movement alive and continue to support workers rights. By working with UNISON to recruit members and provide training and skills to young workers we can keep the momentum going and fight austerity and measures that have a detrimental affect on workers across the country. I think members working in the community and voluntary sector face unique challenges and work related issues. I hope to get more involved in this and help contribute to UNISON being a strong voice for workers in the sector.



**SHAUN CORBETT, AGE 24**  
**POLICY OFFICER**  
**SCOTTISH SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL BRANCH**

I'm a 24-year-old young member, originally from Stranraer but currently living in Dundee. I instinctively joined UNISON when I started full-time work. Both my parents were members of trade unions and my mum was a classroom assistant in Dumfries and Galloway who, with her colleagues, received the support of UNISON in a successful equal pay case.

Having seen what UNISON can achieve, I was keen to join and get involved. I was fortunate to be elected Young Members' Officer for my branch because I was the only committee member aged under 27!

Given this situation I decided to attend Scottish Young Members' Weekend to see what I could do to recruit and involve other young members in my branch. It was a great experience – everyone's been friendly and welcoming, I've learned a lot in the workshop sessions and I'm hoping to come back again. I'm really grateful to my branch for agreeing to support me to attend. If you're a young member thinking of getting involved, try it!

# Beyond Young Members

*"What have I got myself into..."* was my first thought 2 years ago after being nominated as the Young Members Officer for Falkirk Council Branch.

There was the daunting prospect of the unknown and what I was then expected to do! But within a couple of weeks I was attending the Scottish Young Members Weekend, where I met fellow young members and heard about their experiences,

their challenges and their successes. Meeting the other members shaped my understanding of the role and put many of my worries at ease. I could relax and think practically about what I could bring to the role.

UNISON Young Members has also allowed me to dip into issues that matter to me. I am also the Scottish Young Members Welfare and LGBT representative. The opportunities for learning and development are vast but there is certainly something for everyone... *"what have I got myself into?"* turned into *"what else can I get involved in!?"*

I have developed as a person and as a trade unionist in my brief time with Young Members. I have met some amazing and Inspiring people, who I will remain in contact with as I say farewell and move onto the next chapter of my unison journey.

Beyond Young Members, I stood and successfully became Equalities Officer at my branch AGM. I felt confident in standing for this position after completing the LGBT Officers training earlier this year in Newcastle and I look forward to the opportunities and challenges this will bring.

By David Fernie



## Green Network

Calling all young members interested in campaigning on climate change and related issues – UNISON Scotland Green Network would love you to get involved.

Climate change is a major issue for trade unionists – as we point out here and internationally, there are no jobs on a dead planet. There is lots you can get involved in campaigning on, at branch level, across Scotland and the UK and the world. We want greener workplaces and with the STUC, TUC and the international trade union movement through the ITUC, we call for a Just Transition to a low carbon economy – making sure that the benefits and the burdens of the change are shared fairly, with support for those whose jobs may change or go.

The next Green Network meeting is at 1.30pm on Saturday 3 September in the UNISON Scotland office in Glasgow. Email Fiona Montgomery to be added to the mailing list and get more information about coming meetings and events. [f.montgomery@unison.co.uk](mailto:f.montgomery@unison.co.uk)

[www.unison-scotland.org/campaigns/green-workplace](http://www.unison-scotland.org/campaigns/green-workplace)  
[www.facebook.com/greennetworkunisonscotland](https://www.facebook.com/greennetworkunisonscotland)

# > ZERO

## BETTER THAN ZERO

Better Than Zero, a campaign launched last April by the STUC, seeks to tackle issues in employment that affect young workers. Better than Zero doesn't just focus on issues affecting young people, but is organised and led by young trade unionists and those in precarious work from across different sectors. We are a collection of young people who are

passionate about tackling the big issues which disproportionately affect us at work. The campaign has focused on non-unionised workplaces, where the scourge of low pay, zero-hour contracts and poor working conditions are rife. Focusing on industries where these practices are most prevalent, such as the fast food and hospitality industries. Better Than Zero has conducted direct actions against bad bosses to draw attention to the plight of the workers. The campaign is having an important impact. The use of new and creative ways of campaigning and participating in direct action is, for me, what makes Better Than Zero so exciting; young people, with new fresh ideas, standing up to bad bosses and exploitative companies in new and thought-provoking ways. During these direct actions, people walking past shouted their support, and people in cars beeped their horns, and these signs of solidarity from members of the public gave us the drive we needed to persevere.



To find out more about Better Than Zero and for more information on how to get involved in the campaign, go to—

[www.betterthanzero.org](http://www.betterthanzero.org).

**Help us fight back against bad bosses!**



The Scottish Disabled Committee is a group of disabled members from across the region that campaign to ensure that they are given a voice on their issues within UNISON and the wider trade union movement. We do this by electing representatives on to the various UNISON and STUC committees. Issues we are working on of interest to the young members who are disabled include:

- Improved Employment Prospects for disabled people- particularly amongst young people where 58% of young disabled people are out of work compared to 20% of non disabled people.
- Addressing bullying and harassment amongst disabled people in support of the young members committee's "Gonnae No Dae That" campaign.

We want to encourage disabled young members to get more involved, either directly with the Disabled Members Committee or through the Young Members Committee. For more information contact Andrew Crosbie on [unison.sqa@gmail.com](mailto:unison.sqa@gmail.com)



# CASEWORK ISN'T SCARY!

By Dean George

One of the key things about being a UNISON steward or rep is dealing with different types of casework. I work in local government and want to talk about the casework I've worked on in my two years as Young Members' Officer, including the pressure and the benefits of taking on a case.

I enjoy helping people, helping our members at work. I think this then spreads a positive message about the benefits of UNISON and

I hope those I help then go on to encourage others to join and to speak up.

Common issues I come across are victimisation, bullying, harassment, miscommunication and misunderstandings. These lead to me working on grievances, disciplinary, investigations, return to work processes and absences. Let me tell you a bit about these:

- **Grievance:** If you have a concern or complaint at work, you might want to take a grievance up with your employer.
- **Disciplinary:** This is a process for dealing with perceived employee misconduct.
- **Investigation:** This allows an employer to fully consider the matter before making an informed decision.
- **Return to Work:** A form employers ask employees to fill in after an absence. This can also be the process of agreement between an employer and employee about any needs on return to work.
- **Sickness and Absence:** A meeting investigating being absent at work.

Dealing with these issues I have found the paperwork can get overwhelming, especially on my first case. But never be afraid to ask for help, as there will be plenty given – which in time does make case work easier. The best thing about taking cases on and going through all the hard casework is at the end of the case the feeling of accomplishment when you help save someone's job or make it better for them. I hope you consider becoming a steward or rep – remember, there is always help at hand! For more information contact your branch about training opportunities available or call UNISON Direct on 0800 0 857 857.



***We make sure the needs and rights of employees are recognised and heard. By working together with UNISON, you can achieve more.***



# Mental Health At Work

By Hannah Lapsley

What is mental health? World Health organisation states that “Mental health is not just the absence of mental disorder. It is defined as a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community” I’ve recently being doing research into mental health issues affecting young workers and the statistics are rather shocking, never mind the £26billion cost by poor management.

- 8.9% of 16-24 year olds have self-harmed in their lifetime
- 4.7% of 16-24 year olds screen positive for Post traumatic Stress Disorder

Just because you have a mental illness does not mean that you cannot have good mental health and wellbeing, many people go on to live fulfilled lives by learning to effectively manage their mental health problem. So what can you do to help someone you know with mental illness? Some seem like common sense and are simple—

- Be there to talk and listen
- Acknowledge the problem
- Stay in touch
- Ask how you can support them
- Be mindful of your words

I will be helping the UNISON Falkirk branch with the Workload and Stress campaign, we will show the action employers can take to promote staff wellbeing, become a mindful employer and staff engagement is essential. We will also be highlighting the importance of prevention, recovery and return to work. Further updates on the campaign can be found on

[www.facebook.com/falkirkcouncilunison](https://www.facebook.com/falkirkcouncilunison)



By Simon Stuart

## Out In UNISON

As well as being my Branch YM Officer, I’m also the LGBT+ Officer. UNISON have supported me in this role with training, advice and guidance. All of this is open to you too if you want to get involved. As part of the LGBT+ Committee, we fight discrimination and prejudice in the workplace on behalf of UNISON’s LGBT+ members. We work together in local and national groups of LGBT members to campaign and provide support on the issues that matter most to us.





# Scottish Young Members Weekend 2016

By Yvette Morgan & Amanda Thorpe

Yvette and Amanda, Young Member's from the Glasgow City Branch, recently attended the Scottish Young Members Weekend from the 4th – 6th March, at Stirling Court Hotel. At the YM weekend, we got to meet other YM's from over Scotland, there were 17 in total and 8 of them were new to the Scottish Committee. It is great to see other young members and see how active they are within their branches. It is also good to share ideas to do within our branches. The weekend starts off with the usual ice breaker then everyone is then split up into Group's. Group 1 is for people new to the committee and teaches different aspects of UNISON and how it works, learning facts and the structure of the union. Group 2 is for those who've attended before and looks to our future in the union when we are too old for YM's. We spoke about types of cases we would work on as Stewards, what positions there are within the branches and what case work involves. We then practiced a case study and worked on how to help the member. This was very helpful.

On Saturday morning there was a guest speaker in, Suzanne Craig, Legal Officer/Solicitor. She came to speak to us about the Equalities Act & Employment Law. I think everyone was very interested in this topic and everyone got involved in discussions. We then spent the rest of the afternoon working on stories for the newsletter, writing reports for our branch and discussion and agreeing the next steps of our campaign.

Our third and final day consisted of our AGM. We discussed all the conferences/committee's and events that were coming up during the year and we selected people to attend these. It was great to attend this Development weekend for a second year and it was great catching up with the other Young Members. I feel more confident and have gained a few ideas on the ways



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