



**Public Service Alliance of Canada
Regional Executive Vice-President, Ontario
Report
September 26, 2015 to January 29, 2016**

Sisters and Brothers,

This report is a listing of activities that have occurred in the PSAC Ontario region for the period following our last PSAC National Board of Directors Meeting.

Collective Bargaining

Ongoing Bargaining

- Treaty Three Police officers (DCL 410) are in interest arbitration, which took place from January 1-19, 2016. We are now waiting on the arbitrator's award decision.
- Anishinabek Police Service officers (APS) (DCL 426) and Anishinabek Police Service civilians (DCL 425) negotiations are stalled pending a decision on whether these units are under federal or provincial jurisdiction. PSAC has filed leave to appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada for a determination.
- The Ontario Labour Relations Board issued an interim certificate to PSAC, certifying PSAC as the legal bargaining agent for the Nishnawbe-Aski Police Service (NAPS) officers (DCL 401) and civilians (DCL 400) under provincial jurisdiction. PSAC now has the right to serve notice to bargain for first collective agreements under the Ontario Labour Relations Act for both the NAPS Officers and Civilians with these interim certificates.
- University of Ontario Institute of Technology UOIT Postdoctoral Fellows (DCL 555), reached a tentative agreement on January 27, 2016. Ratification meetings will be set up in February.
- The Bluewater Bridge (DCL 501) bargaining team have meeting dates scheduled for March 2nd and 3rd, 2016 for the next round of bargaining with the employer.
- Georgian Downs Racetrack (DCL 500) bargaining team is scheduled to meet with the Employer on February 17 and 18, 2016.
- Commissionaires (DCL 818) at CFB Kingston are currently in conciliation.

Renewal Agreements

- University of Ontario Institute of Technology (UOIT) Sessional Lecturers (DCL 555) ratified their new collective agreement on November 19, 2015.
- On January 18th, 2016 Graduate Teaching Assistants at the University of Western Ontario (PSAC DCL Local 610) ratified their tentative agreement

Organizing

Graduate-Student Research Assistants at Queen's University

PSAC filed a certification application on April 23rd, 2014 to represent 1600 Graduate Student Research Assistants at Queen's University. The vote was conducted on April 30, 2014, however, the results are sealed due to the employer contesting certain ballots cast. The application remains before the board. In two previous rounds, witnesses provided written testimony to the OLRB. We are waiting for dates for a third round as we continue to work toward defining the application of the scope of the unit.

Operational Managers at Ontario Corrections

PSAC Ontario has launched a campaign to organize 600 Operational Managers employed by Ontario's Correctional Services. Ontario's Correctional Service establishes, maintains, operates and monitors correctional institutions and probation and parole offices. The Union of Solicitor General Employees (USGE), a Component of the PSAC, has expressed their support for this organizing campaign. PSAC filed a certification application to request a Union vote and the Ontario Labour Relations Board (OLRB) ordered a vote for the week of April 16th till April 19th, 2013. All ballots have been segregated and the count postponed until the Employer challenge with respect to managerial exclusion is dealt with. The first hearing date took place on October 9, 2013, with hearings also on September 15-17, 2015. At the last round of dates, the Crown presented a witness, and OPSEU and AMAPCEO gave evidence regarding whether bargaining rights belonged to OPSEU or AMAPCEO at the time of the application. We are now waiting for the board's ruling.

Faculty Advisors at University of Ontario Institute of Technology (UOIT)

The employer has not agreed to add the Faculty Advisors to the existing bargaining unit. Instead, all Faculty Advisors have been terminated. We're pursuing an Unfair Labour Practice, which is currently before the board, with the hearing date scheduled for March 11, 2016..

Postdoctoral Fellows at the University of Western Ontario

The Ontario Labour Relations Board ordered a vote on Tuesday December 8th, 2016 for 280 Postdoctoral Fellows employed at the University of Western. The University however is maintaining their position that Postdoctoral Fellows are not employees under the Labour Relations Act despite prior Labour Board decisions to the contrary such as at the University of Toronto. As a result the ballot box will be sealed and PSAC will need to defend the right of Postdoctoral Fellows at Western to organize through litigation before the Ontario Labour Relations Board with hearing dates scheduled for March 14-15, 2016.

Federal Election

The October 19th federal election saw the Liberals form a majority government with 184 seats (39.5%). The Conservative Party went down to 99 seats (31.9%), the NDP at 44 seats (19.7%), the Bloc at 10 seats (4.7%) and the Green Party at 1 seat (3.5%).

PSAC's "Vote to Stop the Cuts" campaign was a tremendous success, with more than 17.5 million people, about 68 per cent of all eligible voters, voting in this election. That's a dramatic increase of almost 3 million voters who voted in 2011.

Of our Region's 16 priority ridings, only 1 went Conservative, as members overwhelmingly voted for change. However, it is regrettable that many NDP labour friendly candidates did lose their seats in Ontario, as voters saw the Liberal Party as a stronger option in defeating the Conservative government than the NDP.

The Liberals have made progressive promises during their election campaign, including many labour friendly proposals such as: Enhancing Canada Pension Plan, restoring Old Age Security and GIS to age 65, increasing infrastructure funding, including new, dedicated funding for public transit, investing \$3 billion over the next four years to improve home care, mental health services and access to prescription drugs, launching a national public inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women and repealing the Conservatives' flawed anti-labour bills C-377, C-525 and sections of Bill C-4 and C-59.

Therefore, it is vital that PSAC continue its election momentum by continuing to lobby the new government to ensure that these campaign promises are fulfilled.

Provincial By-election

Premier Kathleen Wynne has called a by-election in the riding of Whitby-Oshawa for Feb. 11. The seat became vacant in August, when Progressive Conservative Christine Elliott resigned months after losing the race for party leader to Patrick Brown.

All three parties have nominated their candidates in Whitby-Oshawa: Niki Lundquist, a labour lawyer, will carry the NDP banner, regional councillor Lorne Coe is the PC candidate, while regional councillor Elizabeth Roy is running for the Liberals.

Our PSAC Greater Toronto Area Council, in coordination with the OFL, is conducting two phone banks to call members that reside in Whitby and Oshawa and encourage them to vote in the upcoming by-election. A letter from the REVP went out to all members in the riding on January 29, 2016, urging our members to vote for a public service friendly candidate, while providing members with a questionnaire to ask candidates to determine their priorities.

Mobilization

Ontario Local Health Check Survey

At the start of 2015, our Region undertook a new Local Health Check Survey to assess our Locals capacity. PSAC Ontario asked Local Executive members to fill out this survey to determine member engagement and what development needs a Local may have. From that information, regional representatives have been working with identified Locals to create action plans to improve the capacity of those Locals.

Treasury Board Mobilization

Treasury Board Area Coordinators continue to meet to strategize on mobilizing members to in support of this round of bargaining. Area Coordinators are also taking part and encouraging members to lobby their local MPs on the need for a fair contract and the importance of sick leave.

We Are All Affected Campaign

CIU Day of Action

PSAC and the Customs Immigration Union (CIU) held a day of Action on October 8, 2015 at three locations across Canada, including Toronto Pearson airport. Over 100 members came together to send a loud and clear message protesting the Harper government's cuts to public service and the installation of automated border clearance kiosks at airports that compromise security. The event was very successful and received media attention:

- <http://www.citynews.ca/2015/10/08/video-border-agents-at-pearson-say-safety-compromised-by-automated-border-clearance-kiosks/>
- <http://globalnews.ca/video/2267407/border-officers-protest-expansion-of-self-serve-kiosks>

Health Care for International Students in Ontario

On January 20, 2016, a letter from the REVP was sent to Minister Reza Moridi, Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities and Minister Dr. Eric Hoskins, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care to include international students under our provincial public health care system.

Currently, international students studying at universities must enroll in a private health insurance program (the University Health Insurance Plan), which costs between \$700 - \$2,000 per year and can require students to pay over \$3,000 in mandatory hospital insurance fees if they have two or more dependents. International students in college programs are also required to pay for mandatory private health insurance that can cost between \$500 - \$700 per year.

This for-profit health insurance plan provides limited health coverage and is not accepted universally by physicians, hospitals and clinics in Ontario. This barrier to health care is further compounded if an international student cannot afford to pay upfront for this second-tier system.

Our government had previously covered international students under OHIP until 1994. Our union is demanding that we return this fundamental right that was once granted, as a principle of fairness and dignity.

Labour Movement/ Solidarity

Ontario Federation of Labour Convention

The Ontario Federation of Labour held its 13th Biennial Convention, under the aspirational banner “The Ontario We Want,” in Toronto from November 23-27, 2015. Over 1500 delegates took part in setting the agenda for the OFL over the next two years, including electing a new leadership team to lead Ontario’s house of labour.

Former Unifor Local 222 President, Chris Buckley from Oshawa was elected OFL President and Barrie and District Labour Council President Patty Coates was elected as the OFL Secretary-Treasurer. After a three-way race for the position of OFL Executive Vice-President, Ahmad Gaied from UFCW Local 1000A was elected.

Delegates also passed a comprehensive action plan that will guide the OFL over the next 2 years. Some of the highlights of this action plan include:

- Working towards anti-scab legislation
- Supporting strong public services and fighting privatization
- Halting the sale of Hydro One
- Championing Equity
- Working for labour law reform, including a \$15 minimum wage

CUPE Ontario Racial Justice Conference

CUPE Ontario invited PSAC to participate on a panel during the CUPE Ontario Racial Justice Conference taking part in the week of January 25-29, 2016 in Toronto. Sharon DeSousa, REVP for Ontario was the guest speaker on this panel, along with John Cartwright, Toronto & York Region Labour Council President, and Jenny Ahn, Assistant to the National President Unifor.

The Conference dealt with tackling racism in the workplace, organizing for racial equality and addressing equality within our Labour Movement. Sharon DeSousa contributed to the discussion by outlining PSAC’s internal employment equity plan and the policies PSAC has developed in addressing barriers to representation.

Education

Alliance Facilitator Clinic

On October 16-18, 2015, PSAC Ontario held an Alliance Facilitator Clinic to renew and advance the skills of our Ontario member Alliance Facilitators in Toronto. The learning objectives of the Clinic were to create a space for Alliance Facilitators (AF’s) to network with their peers; upgrade facilitation and design skills; provide input for a toolkit; and to build the capacity of the Ontario Region AFN Program.

Directly Chartered Locals Conference

The PSAC Ontario Directly Chartered (DCL) Conference took place from October 22-25, 2015 in Sault Ste Marie. The theme of the conference was *Empowerment, Strength and Education*. PSAC National Executive Vice-President Chris Aylward came out to address participants, along with the Regional REVP Sharon DeSousa. Participants were provided with tools and strategies on how to engage with their community when advocating for better working conditions and social justice.

Alliance Facilitator Newsletter

On January 28, 2016, a debut newsletter was released aimed at reinvigorating PSAC Ontario's Alliance Facilitator Program (AFN). The new newsletter provides important information on the AFN program and offers insights into how to become a member Alliance Facilitator.

This newsletter builds upon our Region's previous Alliance Facilitator initiatives including:

- The development of an AFN Policy;
- Alliance Facilitator Advanced Training courses offerings; and
- Alliance Facilitator Clinics

PSAC Ontario Health and Safety Conference

The 2015 PSAC Ontario Health and Safety Conference was held from November 14-15, 2015 in Toronto. The theme of the conference was "*Are you Safe at Work? Let's find Out!*" The conference facilitated a forum for Health & Safety activists to reflect upon, discuss and take action on current health & safety issues such as: taking action for healthy workplaces; mental health in the workplace; regressive labour laws such as Bill C-4; and preventing workplace injuries.

Equity and Human Rights

Toronto Regional Women's Committee Charity Drive

On November 17, 2015, the Toronto Regional Women's Committee handed over 75lbs of clothing to two local charities, *Sistering* and *Dress for Success*. These organizations provide clothing to women in need and were grateful to receive the donations.

Supper with Syria

On November 29, 2015, the Toronto Racially Visible Committee and the Toronto Pride Committee attended a fundraiser to assist Ward 21 in Toronto in raising money to sponsor two refugee families from Syria. The event was held at Wychwood Barns in Toronto.

Dec 6th Day of Action and Remembrance on Violence Against Women

Toronto - The Toronto Regional Women's Committee commemorated the National Day of Action and Remembrance on Violence Against Women in Toronto. This year marked the 25th anniversary of the Montreal massacre that gave rise to this day of action. Members took part in the candlelight vigil, which occurred at Philosopher's Walk in Toronto.

Hamilton – The Hamilton Regional Women’s Committee attended a memorial for the 14 female engineering students who were shot at Montreal’s École Polytechnique. The event was organized by the Women’s Centre of Hamilton and participants each laid a red rose as the name of the victims were read aloud. The event also acknowledged the missing and murdered aboriginal women, and other female victims of domestic violence.

Thunder Bay – Members of the Thunder Bay Aboriginal Circle took part in the vigil held at the Finlandia Labour Temple Hall in conjunction with the Thunder Bay District Labour Council’s Women’s Committee.

Kingston – Members from the Regional Women’s Committee and Area Council took part in the white ribbon ceremony at Queen’s University to mark the Day of Action and Remembrance on Violence Against Women.

Equity Open House

On December 2, 2015, the PSAC Ontario Council Equity and Human Rights Committee held an equity open house in the PSAC Toronto Regional Office. All members were welcome to attend to learn more about the work of our Ontario Regional Council Equity representatives in advancing human rights in our union, workplaces and communities.

Human Rights Day

On December 10, 2015, the Toronto Racially Visible Committee raised donations in the spirit of the season for two local charities; the Juliette Place Family Shelter for women in Malvern and the Milestone Foster Homes for Kids.

Thunder Bay Aboriginal Circle

On January 6, 2016, Thunder Bay Aboriginal Circle members took part in the government’s pre-hearings held in Thunder Bay in regards to missing and murdered Aboriginal women.

In conclusion,

I have included the details of my activities since the last National Board of Directors meeting for your review.

Respectfully submitted for your approval,



Sharon DeSousa
Regional Executive Vice-President
Public Service Alliance of Canada, Ontario

REVP Schedule for the period September 26, 2015 to January 29, 2016

Sept. 29, 2015 – Ontario Federation of Labour Executive Committee meeting
Sept. 30, 2015 – PSAC Ontario Election Telephone Town-hall
Oct. 1, 2015 – PSAC Election Meet and Greet in Mississauga
Oct. 7, 2015 – Joint Learning Program Meeting
Oct. 8, 2015 – CIU/PSAC Day of Action at Pearson Airport
Oct. 16-18, 2015 – Alliance Facilitator Clinic
Oct. 21, 2015 – First Nations Police Sector Meeting
Oct. 22-25, 2015 – Directly Chartered Locals Conference
Oct. 26, 2015 – Alliance Executive Committee meeting
Oct. 27-30, 2015 – National Board of Directors meeting
Nov. 4, 2015 – Racially Visible Working Group meeting in Ottawa
Nov. 5, 2015 – Ontario Council Committees meeting
Nov. 6-7, 2015 – Ontario Council meeting
Nov. 11, 2015 – Remembrance Day ceremony at Old City Hall in Toronto
Nov. 12, 2015 – Broadbent Gala reception in Toronto
Nov. 14-15, 2015 – PSAC Ontario Health and Safety Conference
Nov. 16-17, 2015 – Alliance Executive Committee meeting
Nov. 18, 2015 – Kingston Millhaven worksite tour
Nov. 19-20, 2015 – Kingston Locals tour
Nov. 19, 2015 – PSAC Kingston Area Council meeting
Nov. 20, 2015 – Kingston District Labour Council meeting
Nov. 21, 2015 – Coalition of Black Trade Unionists Fundraiser Dinner
Nov. 22-27, 2015 – Ontario Federation of Labour Convention
Dec. 2, 2015 – PSAC Ontario Council Equity and Human Rights Committee
Open House
Dec. 8, 2015 – Workers Health and Safety Centre Board of Directors meeting
Dec. 9, 2015 – Racially Visible Conference meeting in Ottawa
Dec. 10-13, 2015 – PSAC Women’s Forum on Domestic Violence and Work
Dec. 14-17, 2015 – National Board of Directors meeting
Jan. 10-12, 2016 – Alliance Executive Committee meeting
Jan. 18-23, 2016 – Internal Investigation in Yellowknife
Jan. 25, 2016 – CUPE Ontario Racial Justice Conference in Toronto
Jan. 26, 2016 – Workers Health and Safety Centre Board of Directors meeting
Jan. 27, 2016 – United Way Gala Dinner in Toronto
Jan. 29, 2016 – University of Ontario Institute of Technology Local meeting