

ONTARIO COUNCIL NEWSLETTER



VOLUME 2 ISSUE 4

SPRING 2017

PSAC ONTARIO

Marking our Union's Milestones



Last November our union celebrated our 50th anniversary. This year we will mark 20 years since our union's monumental change in our structure called regionalization.

Regionalization led to the creation of our Regional Council and shifted our union from one that was centrally based out of Ottawa, to a regional one.

As we move forward, our union will continue to change to consistently serve the needs of our ever-changing and diverse membership. We have become more politically active, in recognition that good collective agreements require good legislation.

As we continue to engage, mobilize and work towards better working conditions for our members, we will need this continuous self-reflection. For many industries and sectors the nature of work has changed dramatically, and as a strong union we must resist in new and creative ways.

Sharon DeSousa, PSAC Ontario REVP



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7th Triennial PSAC Ontario Regional Convention
May 26-28, 2017
Hilton Mississauga/Meadowvale Hotel
6750 Mississauga Road, Mississauga, Ontario.



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The Joint Learning Program - Celebrating 10 years of joint learning!



JOINT
LEARNING
PROGRAM



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The Joint Learning Program (JLP) provides a unique opportunity for public service employees and their managers in the Core Public Administration to come together to build a healthier, more productive workplace. The JLP is mandated to improve workplace relationships and deepen understanding of the respective roles and responsibilities of the Union and the Employer in the workplace.

Union Members can participate in the JLP in 2 ways:

- Organize a Workshop: Along with a Management Representative in your workplace, organize one or more workshops in your department. For more information, please visit <http://www.jlp-pam.ca/workshoporganization-atelierorganisation-eng> where you can also jointly submit an online request.
- Become a JLP Facilitator – for more information, please visit <http://www.jlp-pam.ca/workshopfacilitation-atelierfacilitation-eng>

Workshops include: Creating a Harassment-Free Workplace; Duty to Accommodate; Employment Equity; Labour-Management Consultation; Mental Health in the Workplace; Respecting Differences/Anti-Discrimination; and Understanding the Collective Agreement.

For more information visit: www.jlp-pam.ca



*Labour-Management Consultation Workshop
Clinic Participants*

International Day of Persons with Disabilities



The PSAC Toronto Members with Disabilities Committee (MDAC) met in the PSAC boardroom to recognize and celebrate International Day of Persons with Disabilities. About twenty members joined together and watched videos about Duty to Accommodate, and “Everyone is Able”; teachers dealing with students with disabilities. Some of the teachers had disabilities as well.

After the videos, there were interesting discussions about how to cope with disability issues.

Souad Soubra Boone,
Members with Disabilities Representative

Labour Day

Labour Day has been an important day for union members and PSAC has been a regular contributor to the Labour Day activities throughout Ontario for decades, including in Toronto.

"I've been at the Labour Council since 1985 and PSAC has been participating since before then," says Maureen King, Administrative Support Staff Member of the Toronto and York Region Labour Council. "Every union attending the parade gives the opportunity to show the support for labour issues. PSAC's participation is vital as a show of strength and solidarity."

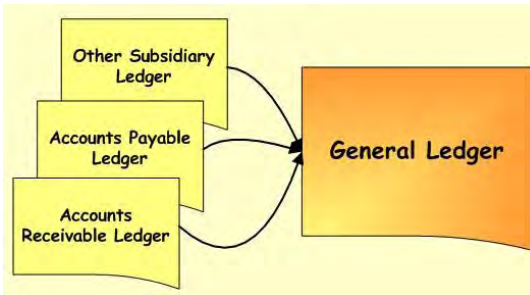
The Area Council is the chief organizer of the Labour Day Parade and its current President, Andrew Budden understands promoting the parade and making sure PSAC is front and centre each Labour Day. "To me the Labour Day Parade is a chance for Labour to come out of the boardrooms, the coffee break and lunch time meetings, and show our strength and pride out in the open in grand spectacle, on the streets of Toronto and on TV," says Budden.

Another long-time Labour Day Parade participant and organizer is Dan Barrett. He first attended the Labour Day Parade in 1992 and has attended over 15 parades since. To him, there is an important message behind the parade and this is why he comes out year after year. "(The Labour Day Parade is) a national commemoration of Labour's valuable contribution to Canadian society in the fight for a living wage," says Barrett. "(It is also about) employees having a voice in what is important to the effectiveness and sustainability of the workplace."

Ryan Ward, Region 5 (GTA) representative



Ontario Council Finance Committee



The Finance Committee is responsible for maintaining an open and transparent accounting of all Ontario Council finances. Its continuing duties include writing cheques, verifying claims and completing the year-end for Ontario Council. Some of the most important decisions that took place over the past three years included changing over all our banking to credit unions, paperless inputting of council's expenses, and hiring a part-time bookkeeper to input accounts receivable and payable into our bookkeeping software.

Special thanks to the members who have served on the Finance Committee over the past three years including; Chair Bob Black and committee members Steve Tuffin, Isabel Wrotkowski and Ryan Ward. Also, special thanks to Regional Executive Vice-President Sharon DeSousa and her Executive Assistant Cleo Reid for their assistance in carrying out our duties.

Bob Black and Ryan Ward, Council Finance Committee

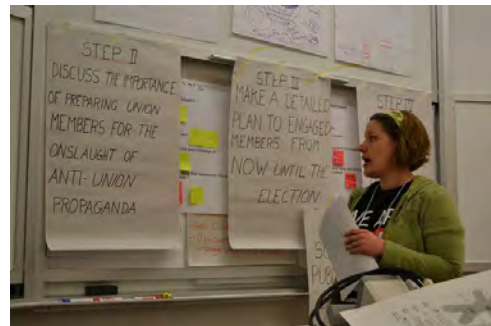
PSAC Ontario Education Committee

The Education Committee is responsible for overseeing education for PSAC members in Ontario. This includes education provided by the Regional Offices, such as Talking Union Basics courses, Spring/Fall school and education offered by Alliance Facilitators, including the Violence in the Workplace workshop.

Alliance Facilitators (AFs) are PSAC members who have been trained in the design and delivery of PSAC education, using popular and adult education techniques. AFs are uniquely suited to interact with members through workshops presented in their Locals or to Regional Committees.

Regional Committees, such as Area Councils and Equity Committees, and Locals are welcome to request that an AF attend a meeting to provide a workshop on one of a number of different topics. If you are interested in additional information on the workshops available and/or to arrange to have an AF attend your event, contact the Regional Education Officer, Shirley Riva, at rivas@psac-afpc.com.

Melanee D Jessup, Chair, PSAC Ontario Council Education Committee



Alliance Facilitators Training 2014. Victor Guzman (l) and Sara Johnson-Vleuten (r)

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Member's Corner

My First Strike

As a young worker in my union, I was not expecting to ever have the opportunity to go on strike. However, as 2016 came to an end I found myself on the front lines of PSAC Local 501's strike. It is such a blessing to have experienced something so bonding with my coworkers. When you're on a picket line you have conversations with coworkers you wouldn't normally get to see and when you return to work they become a familiar face. These familiar faces become people you stop to talk to and genuinely enjoy hearing how their life has been following the strike.

The part nobody can prepare you for is the reintegration into the workplace. There will be members that did cross the picket line, and yes this will suck. The range of emotions felt towards these coworkers is unexplainable. First, you're frustrated at them because you can't understand why someone would ever let their coworkers fight for them. Then, you start to realize that they, like you, made a decision they truly believed in at the time. Ultimately, you don't lose, you gain a contract you fought for and you gain insight into people.

Bailey Ettinger, DCL 501



PSAC Ontario Activism Awards

Three awards will be presented at this year's 2017 Ontario Regional Triennial Convention to members who have shown a high level of activism and outstanding contributions to their Union.

Eligibility is based on the following criteria and the selected nominees will be decided by a sub-committee of PSAC's Ontario Regional Council:

- Must be a PSAC Ontario Region member who is in good standing, as of May 1, 2017
- Has shown exemplary leadership and activism on behalf of PSAC Ontario's membership
- PSAC Ontario Council members are not eligible to be nominated

For more information on how to submit a nomination, go to: <http://ontario.psc.com/psc-ontario-activism-awards>

Nominations must be received no later than **April 28, 2017** and sent to the attention of Lino Vieira, Political Communications officer (vieiral@psc-afpc.com).

Member's Corner

It's easy to build relationships with like-minded people. The tough, but gratifying experience, is building relationships with others that question and test your beliefs. I speak of the relationships I have with four London and area MPs. To lobby all of them face-to-face, accompanied by a constituent, being asked the tough questions, and having the answers, is extremely satisfying.

Questions like: "But don't you think your sick time needs to be tweaked?". Explaining why public sector sick time benefits are generally cost neutral - I don't get replaced when I am sick; or having the report from the Office of the Parliamentary Budget Officer (comparing sick leave used by 20 Federal Departments) at your fingertips to hand over, certainly rebuked that query. Or "I've had members complain to my office that they do not know how the union spends their money", is easily neutralized by explaining how line items on the financials are extensively debated and voted on every three years at the National Convention, and at each Component Convention.

Being prepared when meeting with elected representatives is crucial, as is follow up. You don't need to have all the answers, but you certainly should know where to find them. To that detail I am grateful to PSAC for the support and timely turn around on information requests.

These MPs are members of my community, they generally care about the wellbeing of their constituents and want to have their finger on the pulse of concerns. I feel we have a mutual respect, and they are aware I have many members standing with me.

I encourage everyone to build and maintain a relationship with their local representatives. It's not something you have to do alone, having a sister or brother along will actually strengthen your objective, and your impact.

Make our issues their priority!

Nancy Richter, Agriculture Local 00017



Have Your Say!!

Share your thoughts, tell a story, or speak on an issue that's important to you. We've set aside space in every issue for a member's submission. Articles should be approximately 250 words and pictures are welcome!!

Send your submissions to Lino Vieira, PSAC Ontario Region Political Communications Officer, at vieiral@psac-afpc.com. Submissions are welcome anytime!

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PSAC Ontario Equity and Young Worker Summit

The Ontario PSAC Equity and Young worker representatives on Council as well as all the executives from these committees throughout Ontario were invited to participate in the first ever Ontario Equity and Young Worker Summit. It was held March 2nd – 3rd, 2017 in Mississauga Ontario. This was a forum unlike any I have seen and an unbelievable opportunity for networking and building our strengths.

It was evident that we need to build capacity and we looked at the age old struggle of engaging the membership. This has never been easy but a few things that certainly stood out were how important social media can be (thanks to Lino Vieira for this session) and to never lose sight of the importance of the one on one face to face interactions with members. I will confess my social media interactions are non-existent, however this highlighted how important they are.

As PSAC Ontario Council representatives, we were invited to sit on a panel where the committee executives were able to ask any and all questions of us. This was a great way to give the committee members a forum to ask questions or outline areas of concern. One of the biggest takeaways from this exercise was how interconnected we all are. At the end of the day we are the union and we will only be strong if the bonds between us are unbroken.

Missy Taylor, Regional Women's Committees Representative



Recognizing Our Activists



On November 19, 2016, the annual CBTU awards dinner took place, with this year marking the 20-year anniversary of the organization.

Congratulations to Lloyd Brown, Racially Visible Members Representative on PSAC Ontario Council and the Chair of the PSAC Toronto Racially Visible Committee for receiving this year's Coalition of Black Trade Unionists - Bromley Armstrong Humanitarian Award!



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Celebrating Our Activists



Ken Boone's union involvement dates back to the 1960's when, as a member of the then Canadian Auto Workers, he was an Area Strike Co-ordinator. When he joined Corrections Canada he became a member of the Union of Solicitor General Employees, a Component of PSAC. He was initially a Steward, and eventually became the President of his Local when he moved to work in the Peterborough Parole Office. He became more involved in his Union after moving to Toronto. He trained to become an Alliance Facilitator and offered some training programs in the late 1990's. He served as President of his USGE Local for about 5 years.

In 1997, he became a charter member of Ontario Council. He first served as the Political Action representative, then became a Region 5 Representative. In his third term he was elected as the Alternate to the Regional Executive Vice-President.

Ken was elected to, and served as a member of the PA National Bargaining team for 2 rounds of negotiations. In 2011 he began to reduce his union activities due to his then wife's illness. He continued to participate in the Members with Disabilities Access Committee. Ken retired from active employment March 22, 2017 and we wish him all the best in his new journey.

Congratulations Ken!!

Ontario Council 2014 to 2017



PSAC Ontario Council members would like to thank the membership for allowing us to serve you for the past three years!!