



PSAC
Ontario

REFLECTIONS OF 2017

New Labour Laws in Ontario

Workers in Ontario have won tremendous improvements to labour laws in this province. Along with an increase to the minimum wage to \$14 an hour (\$15 in 2019), every worker has gained access to 10 days of job-protected, emergency leave (including two paid days), equal pay for equal work protections, and better scheduling provisions. Also, now it will be easier for workers to join a union and organize for better working conditions.

With these new benefits in place, the lives of 25 per cent of all workers in Ontario will be greatly improved. These wins were accomplished by labour and community activists working together to pressure the government and to fight back against the business lobby.

We have a lot of work ahead of us, as we have seen businesses such as Tim Hortons rolling back their workers benefits. We cannot let wealthy corporations who benefit from keeping workers in poverty, claim they cannot afford a higher minimum wage. Let us make our society better by uniting against corporate greed.



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Regional Equity and Young Worker Committees Summit

PSAC Ontario held an Equity and Young Worker Committee Summit on March 2-3, 2017, for all executive committee members in Ontario. National President, Sister Robyn Benson spoke on the history of equity and young worker committees in our union; their successes and the continued need for them.

The different equity and young worker committees had the opportunity to discuss the challenges they face, successes they have had, strategies for mobilizing and common goals on how to promote equality.



Ontario Lottery and Gaming (OLG) Corporation – Slots at Woodbine Lock-out



Over 400 of our members employed at the Ontario Lottery and Gaming (OLG) corporation, Slots at Woodbine in Toronto, were locked out on July 14, 2017. One of the main issues for our members was the issue of precarious work. Over 60 per cent of the workforce is part-time, yet many have been working full-time hours for years, without the status of full-time and the benefits that go along with it.

Members picketed the worksite at all 7 entrances for 3 weeks from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. every day of the week. As patrons came through, members asked them to sign a petition to the Ontario Legislature to demand the Ontario government provide a new directive to their crown corporation, the OLG. Thousands of signatures were collected, and radio ads, newspaper ads and electronic mobile billboards were used to raise attention on the issues facing these workers.



On July 27, 2017, members went to picket the local Liberal MPP's office, Shariq Qaadri, as he had been absent for 2 weeks while his constituents had been locked-out. Members met with his legislative assistants to present a letter demanding he takes action to pressure the OLG back to the bargaining table.

On July 29, 2017, members and community supporters from the Kingston area, traveled down to support our picket lines at Woodbine. This included our PSAC Kingston Area Council as well as the Fight for \$15 Kingston chapter, which helped show our Woodbine members that they were not alone in this fight.

The lock-out ended after three weeks with members ratifying their new agreement that included the creation of 25 new full-time positions, improved job security language, and better scheduling practices to address work-life balance.



Phoenix Day of Action

February 24, 2017, marked one year since the launch of the catastrophic Phoenix pay system. To mark this occasion, PSAC held a National Day of Action in which we asked all Locals to participate. Members responded across Ontario, taking pictures with messages to the Prime Minister and to the President of Treasury Board.

I am proud of our members who continue to stand strong against this government by holding rallies, lobbying their MPs, and sharing their stories with the media. Our efforts have led to gains in helping our members and we will continue to hold this government accountable until every one of our members' issues have been fixed.



**BURNT BY
PHOENIX**



April 28 – Day of Mourning

The North Simcoe Muskoka District Labour Council raised funds from the Labour movement to erect a Day of Mourning monument at Tudhope Park in the city of Orillia. PSAC Ontario was a proud sponsor, and as such our name has been engraved on the plaque behind the monument.

The North Simcoe Muskoka & District Labour Council held the unveiling of the monument on the Day of Mourning, with guest speaker Chris Buckley, President of the Ontario Federation of Labour. To further raise awareness of the importance of why we commemorate Day of Mourning, PSAC Ontario ran radio ads for a week in St. Catharines, Thunder Bay, Orillia, Barrie, Sudbury and Sault Ste. Marie.



PSAC National Equity Conferences

On May 24-28, 2017, the PSAC National Equity Conferences took place in Toronto. More than 500 members participated, which offered training on a variety of issues and strategies around ending discrimination.

With the theme “Equality at Work”, the five-day gathering was the second time PSAC held the conferences for all five equity groups simultaneously in one location. This allowed for the cross-sharing of issues and perspectives among members from different equity-seeking groups.



Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) Convention

The CLC Convention was held from May 8-12, 2017 in Toronto. At the end of the Convention the CLC developed an Action Plan based on the resolutions, committee reports and policies discussed.

Hassan Yussuff was acclaimed as the CLC President, Marie Clarke Walker was elected Secretary-Treasurer, Donald Lafleur was re-elected as Executive Vice-President and PSAC's Larry Rousseau was elected as Executive Vice-President.



2017 OFL Convention

The Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) held its 14th Convention, under the banner “Power ON” from November 20 to 24, 2017, in Toronto. This Convention marked the 60th year since the creation of the OFL. Members from PSAC Ontario and the National Capital Region were in attendance to debate and vote on resolutions, along with an action plan for the OFL for the next two years.



During the Convention, delegates re-elected incumbent President Chris Buckley, and acclaimed Secretary-Treasurer, Patty Coates and Executive Vice-President Ahmad Gaied to lead the Federation until 2019.

As part of the OFL's Convention, delegates joined together to rally at Queen's Park on November 22, 2017, the same day that *Bill 148: Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act, 2017*, was to be voted on. It was a tremendous day as Bill 148 passed, bringing progressive changes to labour laws in Ontario.



College Faculty Strike

12,000 professors, instructors, counsellors, and librarians represented by OPSEU went on strike on October 16, 2017. The main issues that led to the strike were precarious employment, job security and academic freedom.

Our members stood in solidarity at many of the picket lines at various colleges across Ontario. On October 24, 2017, PSAC DCL 610 marched with OPSEU Local 110 on their picket line. As academic workers, the Local shares many of the same concerns about fairness and precarious work. On October 27, 2017, members of DCL 901 in Kingston joined striking OPSEU workers at St. Lawrence College. The Local joined the picket line every Friday to show their solidarity. On November 7, 2017, OPSEU local 110 received support on the picket line from the PSAC London Area Council and members of the London District Labour Council at Fanshawe College.



Labour Day

Labour Day celebrations continue to grow in Ontario, with members participating in events across the province.

To commemorate the day, members were given Labour Day t-shirts that PSAC Ontario produced with one of the three following slogans on them: *Our Power, Our Movement*; *We Are Union and Stronger Together*.



PSAC Ontario Triennial Convention



The PSAC Ontario 7th Triennial Convention took place from May 26-28, 2017, in Mississauga. The Convention theme was “Our Union, Our Future!”. Guest speakers included Maude Barlow from the Council of Canadians and Ryan Hinds, a critically acclaimed theatre artist. Sister Robyn Benson, PSAC National President, was also in attendance to address the Convention floor and conduct elections.

The selected Convention charity was the Assaulted Women’s Helpline, which has been instrumental in positively impacting the lives of hundreds of thousands of women across Ontario. This charity was selected by Ontario Regional Council in consideration of PSAC’s stop domestic violence campaign.



Ontario Regional Council/NVP/RVP Strategy Session

A special one-day meeting was held on November 2, 2017, with the PSAC Ontario Regional Council and the Component National and Regional officers that reside in the Ontario region, to establish a broad action plan for Ontario Council’s three-year mandate.

