

ONTARIO COUNCIL NEWSLETTER



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PSAC ONTARIO

Coming Together to Make Change



Strikes and lock-outs happen very rarely, even though these stories tend to be overrepresented in the media. In our region, in the six years I have been your Regional Executive Vice-President, the Ontario region has only experienced two labour disruptions.

The first was a strike by our members who work at Blue Water Bridge in Point Edward, which took place in November 2016 for three weeks, and the lock-out of our members who work for the OLG Slots at Woodbine in Toronto this summer for three weeks.

When a strike or lock-out does occur, what tends to be focused on in the media are the bargaining issues that led to the labour disruption. What is not talked about is the tremendous amount of organizing, mobilizing and sacrifice that workers endure to stand together during this difficult time. Yet, by standing together in solidarity with your coworkers, the labour movement and the public; workers have the power to stand up to their employer and create positive changes in their workplace. And in my experience, a Local that has gone through a strike or lock-out becomes stronger, more active and connected with each other. By standing together we grow as individuals and as a movement.

Sharon DeSousa, PSAC Ontario Regional Executive Vice-President



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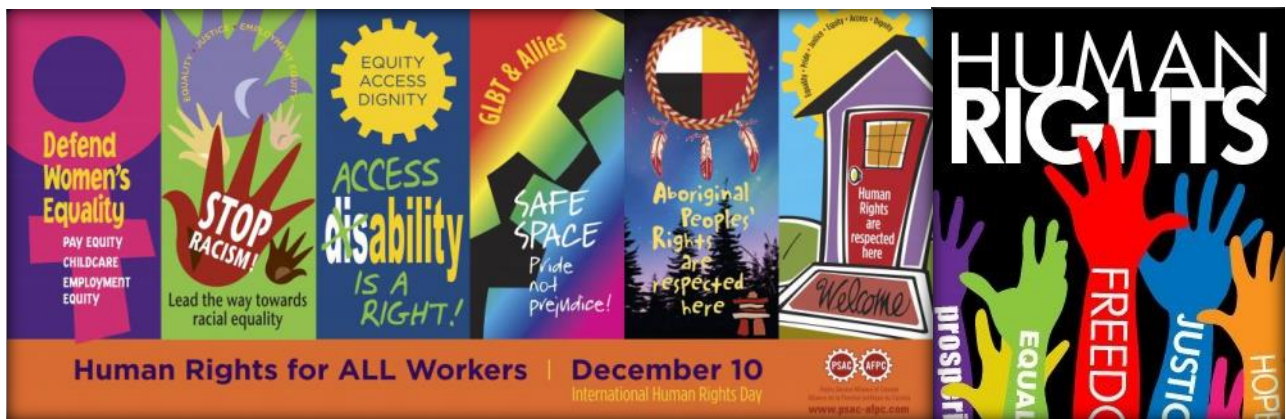
Get Involved in Your Union!



If you are reading this, you are a member of the PSAC and have the ability to participate in Union events. PSAC holds training and has many different structures that members can get involved with. How about attending an Area Council meeting? Or maybe you are interested in human rights and would like to join one of our Women's Committees, Pride Committees, Aboriginal Circles, Members with Disabilities Access Committee or Racially Visible Committee. There are also parades, picnics, conferences and training opportunities for members.

Come on out and see not only what your union can do for you, but what you can do for yourself and other union members. See a list of upcoming events by visiting <http://ontario.psaac.com/events>.

Judith Goodfellow, Ontario Council Region 4 (Southwestern) Representative



Mobilizing for a Fair Contract



On June 20th, 2017, PSAC members who are border service officers at Cargo Operations, Pearson Airport, gathered in solidarity to denounce the 3 year wait time for a new Collective Agreement. Events like this one were organized by the Customs and Immigration Union (CIU), a Component of the PSAC,

to highlight this unfairness.

Border service officers are responsible for the safety and security of all Canadians, and we demand respect from our employer.

Leslie Searl, Ontario Council Region 5 (GTA) Representative





End the Tragedy



The “Full Moon Walk” helps to raise awareness about our missing and murdered mothers, daughters, aunts, grandmothers and sisters. This year marked the 13th annual Full Moon Walk, which was held in Thunder Bay on September 6, 2017. This year the walk was dedicated to mothers of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls to honour the coordinator Sharon Johnson’s mother Joyce, who passed away earlier this year without ever knowing what happened to her daughter Sandra.

The PSAC Thunder Bay Regional Women’s Committee (RWC) unveiled their new banner in support of the 13th Annual Full Moon Walk, which states: "Justice for Murdered and Missing Indigenous Woman and Girls!"

Sheila Karasiewicz, Aboriginal Members Representative PSAC Ontario Council



Celebrating Pride



Across Ontario, various communities, cities and towns hold Pride celebrations during the summer. These events are important to celebrate the gains made within the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans (LGBT+) communities, and help to highlight the need to continue the fight for equality. PSAC supports Pride celebrations and many of our members took part. With events in Toronto, London, Barrie, Kingston and many other locations it wasn’t uncommon to see PSAC flags, floats and swag among the crowds.

A special thank you to all Committees, Area Councils and members who organized and/or attended Pride events in your community. If you are interested in getting something started for next year be sure to check with your PSAC Regional Office.

Josh Sadler, Gay, Lesbian, Bi-Sexual, and Transgender Members Representative



June 21st National Aboriginal Day



National Aboriginal Day celebrates the unique heritage, diverse cultures and outstanding achievements of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples in Canada. This year it coincided with Canada's 150th birthday, and with it, the opportunity to continue to demonstrate that we still have a long way to go in our treatment of Indigenous peoples.

Many Indigenous communities still do not have access to safe drinking water. Indigenous children receive less funding for schooling than their peers in provincial schools. Many communities are living in poverty, and the legacy of residential schools and colonialism are a painful legacy whose impacts continue today.

Many of our youth are committing suicide and our women and girls are still going missing and/or murdered. Why would Indigenous peoples want to celebrate 150 years of this?

It hurts to learn the facts and the history and how it impacts us and our children. We need to find a way forward, in a good way. Wouldn't it be an amazing step forward to honour the original inhabitants of this land? Maybe Canada could make National Aboriginal Day a National Holiday to allow everyone to celebrate the unique heritage, diverse cultures and outstanding achievements of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples in Canada.

Sheila Karasiewicz, Aboriginal Members Representative PSAC Ontario Council



Ontario Council Members' Profiles



Hi, my name is Susan Glanville, and I'm proud to say I hold a position on PSAC Ontario Regional Council after being elected at the 2017 Ontario Regional Convention. After receiving training in July, I am ready and eager to start working with our members who belong to regionally based separate employers. Regionally based separate employers are employers that are considered "non-core Public Service" or non-governmental organizations. For example, members who work at airports like North Bay and Thunder Bay are considered regionally based separate employer Locals.

Susan Glanville, Ontario Council Regionally Based Separate Employers Representative



My name is Peggy Jones and I am your Directly Chartered Locals (DCL) representative on Ontario Council. Like many activists within our union, we tend to be a part of many of our union's structures. I am a member of DCL 818, Kingston District Commissionaires, and serve as Treasurer of my Local, Treasurer for the PSAC Kingston Area Council, and Chair of the PSAC Kingston Area Regional Women's Committee. I love being a volunteer on these committees and I am honoured to represent and speak on behalf of the members who belong to DCLs in Ontario.

As a dedicated union activist, I will be in your corner willing to fight for you and advocate for making real change for our membership. Thank you for your trust and I will work hard to represent you.

Peggy Jones, Ontario Council Directly Chartered Locals Representative



I have been working with my Local Executive for the past five years, within various positions, most recently as Local President. I have had the opportunity to sit on our bargaining team for SSO employees. I decided to run for my position on Ontario Council so that I could continue my work as a union activist.

As a woman, racially visible, young worker, in northern Ontario, I want to ensure that the voices of our diverse membership are heard. I am also excited for the opportunity to work with the Locals in my area and to work with Dana Kelly, the second northeastern representative on Ontario Council, to ensure our region is well represented.

Shalane Rooney, Ontario Council Region 2 (Northeastern) Representative

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For the Earth and Water Walk 2017

For Earth and Water Walk 2017, began on April 20th, 2017, from Spirit Mountain in Duluth, Minnesota, USA and over the course of 97 days was completed on the St. Lawrence Seaway in Matane, Quebec on July 26, 2017. A total of 5,144 kilometres and over 6,394,000 steps for Nibi/Water were taken by the Water Walkers.

Elder Josephine Mandamin first began walking around Lake Superior to raise awareness and pray for the protection of our freshwater in 2003. Since then she has conducted 13 Water Walks across the Great Lakes, St. Lawrence River and many other major rivers. She has inspired a generation of women to care for the water, with myself being one of them. I was both honoured and blessed to have had the opportunity to join the Water Walkers at the beginning of the walk and again at the end of the walk. Also, while on the Water Walk, I took the opportunity to bring awareness to PSAC's campaign, "Thirsty for Justice", to demand that Grassy Narrows, and more than 100 Indigenous communities, get access to safe, clean water.

Sheila Karasiewicz, Aboriginal Members Representative PSAC Ontario Council



Member's Corner

Body Positivity Workshop: Empowering Ourselves, Empowering Others

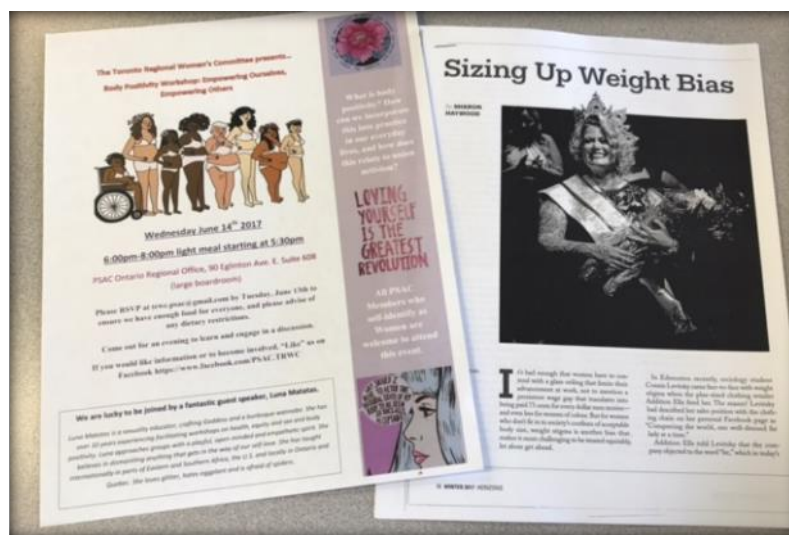


On June 14th, 2017, the PSAC Toronto Regional Women's Committee hosted a fantastic guest speaker on the subject of body positivity. With facilitator Luna Matatas (Luna@LunaMatatas.com), we engaged in discussions regarding body positivity as resistance.

We discussed ways to incorporate this into practice in our everyday lives and how this relates to our union activism. This movement is an important topic for women in the labour movement due to the systemic oppression that women face. We see women's bodies being regulated and this plays out in how we view ourselves. We are shown through the media that as women, our looks matter more than anything else. Those with bodies that are viewed as non-normative face a lot of exclusion, discrimination and stigma.

We have the ability to love our bodies and ourselves because we are strong, capable women. When we love ourselves, we are stronger. Refusing to accept the shame that we're made to feel, we create change in our lives and communities. We transform shame and struggle into pride and peace. It serves as an invitation for others to love their bodies also. We challenge you to love your body's "imperfections", real or perceived.

Lynda MacLellan, PSAC Toronto Regional Women's Committee Chair



Have Your Say!!

Share your thoughts, tell a story, pontificate 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!

The Future is Now!



It's not surprising that young workers' place within the labour movement tends to gain leverage by focusing on the future. You've heard it before, "young workers are the future"; this colloquial statement is typically followed with "strength of our Union", "activists", "leaders", and so on. While it is true that engaging, mobilizing, educating and empowering young workers is vital to ensuring the continuation of our Labour movement; young workers are integral to the present strength of our movement also.

Over the past few years, a concerted effort has been made to give young workers a stronger voice within our Union. As a result, we have seen growing numbers of young workers participating in educational programs, conferences, conventions, within area councils, Locals and in our communities. Our presence in these spaces has been instrumental in raising awareness on a number of issues facing young workers and enshrines our voices within our Union structure.

However, let us not forget that young workers have been building coalitions and solidarity with an intersectional analysis that is critical to building strength within our Union and within our communities. Additionally, young workers remain steadfast in support of progressive values within the Labour movement and beyond, including promoting the use of gender-inclusive language, bringing awareness to injustices faced by migrant workers, calling attention to food insecurity especially amongst post-secondary students, campaigning for affordable child-care, advocating for sex worker rights, campaigning to reduce student debt, and the list goes on. Clearly, young workers have their sights set on the future, but the future is now.

Amanda Gebara, Ontario Council Young Workers Representative



FIX PHOENIX PAY SYSTEM!

PSAC Activism Awards 2017

PSAC Ontario Council was proud to award the Ontario Activism Awards to three deserving recipients at the PSAC Ontario Convention May, 2017.

L to R: Craig Berggold, DCL 901; Lynda MacLellan, CEIU Local 638; Sharon DeSousa, Ontario REVP; Ed Jones, DCL 818

Congratulations to all!



PSAC Ontario Council - 2017-2020

