

ONTARIO COUNCIL NEWSLETTER



VOLUME 2 ISSUE 7

SUMMER 2018

PSAC ONTARIO

Ontario Provincial Election



So for many progressive people in this province, this election was extremely disappointing with the election of a Doug Ford, Progressive Conservative (PC) government.

The result of this election demonstrates the urgent need for electoral reform, both in this province and federally. We need an electoral system that is representational, to avoid majority government's that are elected without the majority of the vote.

I believe it also needs to be stated that for many voters who did cast their ballot for the PC party, they did so with the belief that Doug Ford would deliver on his promises to cut taxes and balance the budget; without cutting public services and laying off workers. As we have seen in the past, what is promised on the campaign trail is rarely respected once a Party is in power.

This election will not change our union's commitment to continue to advance our members' interests, fight for social justice and hold our political representatives accountable. Mobilizing and taking action is how we accomplish real, structural change. I ask that our region's 30,000 members be ready to engage in lobbying, marches and any other action necessary to challenge any threat to the rights of workers.

Strong democracies are about sustained and active civil participation of every citizen; beyond casting a ballot during an election.

Sharon DeSousa, PSAC Regional Executive Vice-President – Ontario



Inside this issue:	
What a Day at Convention Looks Like PSAC Directly Chartered Locals (DCL) Academic Sector Retreat	2
2018 PSAC National Convention	3
Supporting Trans Employees: A step in the right direction Ontario Health Coalition	4
"Just Add Hot Water" Campaign	5
Council Member Profile Toronto Airport Workers Council	6
"For the Love of the Rivers": Water Walk 2018 Goodbye Robyn!	7

FIX PHOENIX PAY SYSTEM!



ONTARIO COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

What a Day at Convention Looks Like

The PSAC National Convention took place from April 29 to May 4, 2018, in Toronto. As a delegate, let me take you through a typical day at a National Convention. Normally, the day starts around 6:30 a.m. You're up and ready for your caucus meeting at 7:30 a.m. Many delegates have at least 2 or 3 caucus meetings to attend.

There are also meetings held over the lunch break, quite a few are held early in the morning, or right after the end of day. Resolutions are discussed, platforms reviewed and members from across the country network to advance their issues. Convention is so important because it sets our union's priorities for the next three years, sets our budget and is the only place where we can make changes to our constitution.

Being elected as a delegate to convention is a rewarding experience, but it is a lot of work and responsibility. Despite all this, I encourage members to put their names forward to attend and I guarantee you that you will learn a lot and I'm sure gain a few new friends too.

Judi Goodfellow, Southwestern Ontario Representative



Ontario Caucus at the PSAC National Convention 2018

PSAC Directly Chartered Locals (DCL) Academic Sector Retreat

The 2018 Ontario Academic Sector Retreat "Bringing people together and building Academic Workers' Power" took place on May 25-27, 2018 in Cornwall. Delegates from the PSAC academic Locals across the province, including Local 555 (University of Ontario Institute of Technology), Local 610 (Western University) and Local 901 (Queen's University) took part to discuss membership mobilization and strategies on how to build successful campaigns.

Craig Berggold, DCL Academic Sector Representative



2018 PSAC National Convention

A common theme at this year's national Convention was the rise in precarious work. More and more of our members are having to deal with precarious work situations; contract, seasonal, short-term and casual. DCL Local 901 teaching assistant Lesley Jamieson understands this first-hand, "I would love to see PSAC working both at the provincial and the federal level to join the fight against short-term, insecure employment. In particular, I hope this translates not only into participation in CLC or Federation of Labour led campaigns, but also in support of small, grassroots initiatives which involve both union and non-union workers."

There were also resolutions that gave increases in funding for Area Councils, regional health and safety conferences, alternative voting methods for ratification votes and fully-funded regional conventions. Delegates adopted a new policy statement on the Phoenix Pay System, approved negotiating a three-year term rollover for all employees, committed to actively combating harassment, lobbying on ending precarious work and delivering Indigenous Awareness Training.

What was particularly incredible was the number of first-time delegates. Several delegates commented on this, here are two comments:

- "Our union has a lot of strong activists, including young workers. This is so vital for unions to continue to be viable," first-time Canada Employment and Immigration Union delegate Sara Beth Johnson.
- "The number of new delegates – first time delegates – was amazing. We are one union and together we are strong!" Marie Polgar-Matthews, University of Ontario Institute of Technology teaching assistant.

Ryan Ward, Greater Toronto Area Representative



ONTARIO COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

Supporting Trans Employees: A step in the right direction



In August of 2017, the Department of Public Service and Procurement Canada (PSPC) released something amazing: “Support for Trans Employees: A Guide for Employees and Managers”. The guide is a comprehensive resource that was developed during consultation with the various stakeholders within PSPC.

The following is a quote from the guide:

“PSPC is committed to equitable employment practices that support participation by all. As such, the purpose of this guide is to provide a safe, respectful and inclusive work environment for all employees, including trans and gender variant employees.”

Although this guide is applicable specifically to PSPC, it contains many valuable resources that could be explored in the absence of a similar guide in your workplace. This is not the only example of an excellent workplace resource for Trans employees, but it’s an example that shows management, employees and our union can come together to create a resource for the betterment of Trans workers.

Josh Sadler, LGBTQ2+ Representative

Ontario Health Coalition



The Ontario Health Coalition (OHC) presented to the PSAC Ontario Council in April 2018. The OHC’s primary goal is to protect and improve our public health care system. They are a non-profit, non-partisan public interest activist coalition and network.

They empower their community members and local chapters to actively engage in making public policy on matters related to our public health care system.

They are leading the way in protecting our public health care system from threats such as cuts, delisting and privatization. PSAC Ontario Council is in full support of this organization, as well as the Ontario Federation of Labour and unions across the province. With over 400 member organizations and a network of local health chapters, the OHC is working to make our system better for everyone. If you would like more information on the Ontario Health Coalition, please visit:
www.ontariohealthcoalition.ca

Judi Goodfellow,
Southwestern Ontario Representative



“Just Add Hot Water” Campaign



On August 31, 2016, a box filled with Mr. Noodles packages was delivered to Queen’s University’s, Principal Woolf’s office. Each ramen packet contained an individual message written by academic workers on their precarious working conditions, such as “Your luxury is our poverty.”

Some of the members at DCL 901 who work at Queen’s University were living in poverty, having to rely on the local food bank to feed their families. The personalized Mr. Noodle messages allowed each worker to be heard while remaining anonymous. Photographs of each noodle packet message were tweeted daily in a successful social media campaign that went viral attracting

media coverage.

Over the holiday season, the Local continued to shame the University with radio ads highlighting the precarious working conditions of our members. All of this organizing and pressure, including a strong strike vote mandate, paid off and a new collective agreement was reached. For the first time in Canadian history postdoctoral workers gained access to a \$2000 per child per year, childcare benefit, along with a substantial raise and a new pilot program to gain access to a family doctor. This hard-won contract set a new standard for collective agreements in Canada and will have an impact on future academic employees at Queen’s University and beyond.



Craig Berggold, DCL Academic Sector Representative

Member’s Corner

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!

ONTARIO COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

Council Member Profile



Hello Ontario Region, I'm Ryan Ward, one of your two Region 5 – Greater Toronto Area (GTA) representatives on Ontario Council, along with Leslie Searl. If you don't know much about Region 5, we stretch as far north as Gravenhurst, south to Lake Ontario, east to Durham Region and West to the Mississauga border.

This is my second term on Ontario Council as your Region 5 representative and prior to that I was an Alternate for the region. I see my role as helping Locals throughout the region know about what is taking place and getting our members to participate and take action with their union.

If you live and work in Region 5, we want to hear from you. Come follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/psacregion5, come visit our Facebook page www.facebook.com/PSACregion5 or email me at psacregion5rep@gmail.com

Ryan Ward, Greater Toronto Area Representative

Toronto Airport Workers Council

The Toronto Airport Workers Council (TAWC) is a group of organized and unorganized workers at Pearson Airport, united in making Pearson airport a better place for all employees. Unionized employees include members of UNIFOR, IAMAW, Teamsters, as well as PSAC members from the Customs and Immigration Union, Branch 024.



TAWC organizes different activities throughout the year, including activist training, May Day street parades, Day of Mourning services and information pickets. As a group representing over 50,000 employees, TAWC is dedicated to improving health and safety protections and was a strong voice for the \$15 minimum wage. You can learn more from their Facebook page: www.facebook.com/TAWCYYZI

Leslie Searl,
Greater Toronto Area Representative



“For the Love of the Rivers”: Water Walk 2018



“For the Love of the Rivers - Water Walk” was held on Saturday, May 26, 2018. Community members walked for the water in a traditional Anishinaabe ceremony to acknowledge the spirits who have been taken by the rivers. As we walked, we prayed for the water, our ancestors, and for the generations to come. Our community is in need of healing and we acknowledged and honoured the stories held by the rivers, which included the seven Indigenous high school students who died in our city over the period of 2000 to 2011.

Our Water Walk Ceremony began at sunrise from Loch Lomond Lake, which is located on the sacred mountain of Anemki Wajew (Thunder Mountain) also known as Mount McKay and is located on the traditional lands of Fort William First Nation. Our walk was guided by the respected water walker and protector, Josephine Mandamin.

Sheila Karasiewicz, Indigenous Members Representative



Thank you, Robyn!! Happy Retirement!!

