

THE Accent

Prince Edward Island Union of Public Sector Employees

Presidential Election, 2021

The upcoming election will be administered by a mail out/mail in ballot process. Ballots will be mailed to all UPSE members in good standing on **August 16, 2021**. The deadline for the return of the ballots is 4:00 p.m. on **September 16, 2021**. To ensure that you receive a ballot, please ensure your home mailing address is up-to-date with the union (**call 902-892-5335 or toll free at 1-800-897-8773**). The union received two nominations for the position of President by the nomination deadline on July 19, 2021. Karen Jackson and Jim Ryan are the candidates. **Note:** Members who have not received a ballot by **August 27, 2021** may call the office to have a duplicate ballot mailed to their home address. No duplicate ballots will be issued before August 27.

Karen Jackson re-offers for President



Karen Jackson is the President of UPSE, and an LPN with Health PEI at KC Memorial Hospital.

Greetings UPSE Members,

My name is Karen Jackson, and I am honoured to be re-offering for the position of President of PEI Union of Public Sector Employees. I have been a proud UPSE activist for the past 30 years and I have had the honour of serving as your President for the past 6 years.

As your President, I am not on this road alone. Leading UPSE takes an enormous team effort - from our dedicated UPSE staff to our Executive and Board of Directors, to our frontline local officers, and shop stewards, and committee members who volunteer their time and energy to improve our workplaces and enforce our collective agreements, to our rank-and-file members- the reason we exist as a Union. I want to take this opportunity to say Thank You for your support and service to our membership.

To say that 2020 was a challenge would be a major understatement. We all were in uncharted water with the effects that COVID 19 had on our members. Many of you were and still are working from home and we continue to work through the issues that face our members. Difficult decisions had to be made to ensure we were following the Chief health officer's orders and protecting the rights of our members under their collective agreements. There was a real threat of privatizing our LCC, and I knew the long-term effects of allowing the sale of liquor to move to the large grocery stores would certainly mean the loss of public jobs that our members rely on. I could not be prouder of how our members stepped up, in all areas, and continued to deliver the valuable services that Islanders needed and for keeping Islanders safe, often putting their own safety at risk. It goes without saying you all do incredible work!

Jim Ryan offers for President



Jim Ryan is Third Vice President of UPSE, and a Resident Care Worker at Beach Grove Home in Charlottetown.

Greetings Brothers and Sisters,

My name is Jim Ryan and I have been a proud member of Prince Edward Island Union of Public sector employees for the past 20 years!

During my time with our union I have been fortunate to hold several positions, I have been a shop steward and chief steward, which have allowed me to represent our members when they needed their union's support the most.

I have sat on the board of directors as director of local six, but for the past 6 years, I have sat as one of our union's three Vice Presidents. These positions have allowed me to be a part of the group that make decisions and shape the focus of our union and plan for the future.

I currently sit as the Executive Officer on the Constitution & Structure Committee; and, until recently, the Membership Services & Communication Committee.

Both of these committees are very important to our day to day operations. The Constitution & Structure Committee is integral to the governance of our union, and the Membership Services & Communications Committee is tasked with continuing to find better ways to serve the membership as well as the many elections that are held within our organization.

Violence in our member's worksites has been escalating at alarming rates, and I continue to work tirelessly with both our members and the employer to address this serious issue. The violence our members are facing is leading to job burnout and stress. In response we surveyed our members, and I could not Thank you enough for the overwhelming response to our survey. This survey has become a valuable tool for me when speaking to government officials and led to the formation of the Provincial steering committee on workplace violence which I am part of. The committee is developing good policy and a new reporting structure with more accountability for managers to follow up with members on any incidents filed and what steps have been taken to address the incident. I am also continuously lobbying for more staff in many areas.

Organizing/Collective Bargaining: Under my leadership, we have seen the membership increase by organizing the Atlantic Tourism & Hospitality Institute Inc. Despite the challenges of COVID 19 we continued negotiating contracts and have signed several collective agreements with increased wages and benefits for our members. Thank you to all our members who have stepped up to sit on these teams. More needs to be done in organizing groups that are treated unfairly in their worksites but are scared to take that initial step.

UPSE Education: I am a strong believer in providing current union education that is meaningful to our members. During the past year we have updated all our courses. I am especially proud that we now offer advanced steward training, to ensure our stewards have the necessary tools to properly represent the members in their worksites. With our changing population, more work needs to be done to ensure our union is seen as inclusive and welcoming to all our members, and I have been working collaboratively with our affiliates across the country to address this.

I am proud that we now have a young workers committee to further identify the issues facing our younger members. The future of our Union depends on educating our youth about the importance Unions play, in providing workers with a decent standard of living, safe working environments and all the benefits of our collective agreements.

What we have achieved and what I would like to see in the future: We are now on social media, which has been a wonderful engagement tool for our membership, and we will soon be launching a new website. We have a general membership survey ready to go this fall, asking our members for input and I would bring that to our Board of Directors to further develop a strategic plan for UPSE based on what the members feel is important. I would like to see a union presence in Kings and Prince Counties, designated days, giving our members access to LRO's in their area without having to travel to Charlottetown. We need to educate our membership on the basics of what it means to belong to a union. Membership engagement is key to the success of our union. The list goes on and on but these are just a few initiatives I would like to see happen.

On a personal note, I have taken advantage of many Union/Labour-related educational sessions over the years, and have the experience of being a shop steward, Committee Chair, member of several Negotiation Teams, Provincial Director, 2nd Vice President and President. I have enjoyed meeting and working with members across the province and listening to your concerns and issues. Looking back, I am proud of what we have accomplished over the past 6 years, and how we have moved UPSE forward, however, there is much more to be done. We are dealing with employers that continue to disrespect our collective agreements and initiate policy that negatively affects our members. I feel it is a privilege to serve as your President and speak out on your issues. I am as passionate about ensuring our members are protected as I was when I first became an activist. This Union belongs to us all, together we are strong, and I am asking for your support to serve another term as your President. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions at 902-393-9925 or email me at kjack29@hotmail.com.

**Thank You for your consideration,
Karen Jackson**

I was involved in the latest round of negotiations for the health collective agreement. The experience allowed me to see just how hard the decades of our predecessors had to work to build the collective agreement and how important it is to maintain and build on that work.

Over the years, I have availed myself to every educational opportunity available to me. These opportunities have taught me lessons I have used and will use to serve the membership.

I want to express my commitment to UPSE and it's members. Over the years, I have given a great deal of my time to the service of our union and you, it's members. I believe everyone deserves fairness and respect. I have worked hard, in collaboration with the union membership, to make workplaces safer and foster respect. This is important work that is ongoing. As president, I pledge to work to continue this mandate for all of our members.

I am proud to have been a part of the group, including Doug Ferguson, Paula Mathesson and myself, that worked very hard on the reclassification of RCW's, PCW's and addiction workers that resulted in a \$1.21/hr wage increase. This experience further fueled my desire to work hard on behalf of UPSE members and their interests.

As president, I will endeavour to foster greater union participation by exploring new avenues of interaction that speak to our changing population. Representing our members has been the greatest privilege of my life. When we are able to score a victory for our members that will forever improve their lives, it motivates me to do more. I believe our union is uniquely positioned to serve as a microcosm for change that can reverberate across the country. We can serve as a proving ground for what a better workplace can achieve through respect and collaboration.

This union belongs to you, the members. As president, I pledge to move our union forward to meet the needs of our members in ever changing worksites. My passion and optimism towards our union is as strong today as it was when I first joined. I am eager to apply that passion to our unions highest office. Your voice matters, you can use that voice to vote Jim Ryan for president. Thank you for your support.

In solidarity, Jim Ryan, Third Vice President, UPSE

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Note to Candidates

- Candidates for UPSE President shall be prohibited from circulating campaign material with the exception of UPSE bulletin boards in the workplaces where their approved biography and picture may be displayed.

- Candidates shall also be prohibited from ALL other forms of advertising. Candidates who violate this UPSE policy shall be disqualified from the campaign by the Presidential Nominations Committee, and forfeit their deposit.

Source: UPSE Policy, Presidential Election, A-2017-80

