

THE ADVOCATE

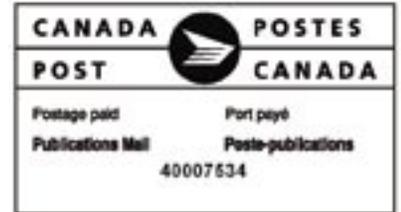
Prince Edward Island Union of Public Sector Employees

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THE ADVOCATE
Summer 2018



Dear Members,

Welcome to the Summer edition of *The Advocate*. It certainly has been a hot summer and I want to acknowledge all our members who have been affected by these extreme conditions in their day-to-day work.



Karen Jackson
President, UPSE

UPSE is raising awareness about the importance of early childhood education in Prince Edward Island, and the need to better compensate Early Childhood Educators (ECEs). It's essential that we take steps to increase the recruitment and retention of ECEs in Prince Edward Island. We can't afford to lose these valuable employees or to have fewer people interested in this career in the future because it lacks incentives. We need to invest in early childhood education so that ECEs are paid more in accordance to their skills and education. See pg. 8 of this edition of *The Advocate* for more information about this important issue.

Another issue on your union's radar concerns PEI's Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) act which is being updated to include a definition of workplace harassment.

UPSE has provided feedback to the Workers Compensation Board regarding the proposed changes. UPSE supports the inclusion of harassment in the OHS act as well as the requirement that employers adopt a harassment policy to govern the workplace.

Further, we are recommending that the WCB consider including a definition of bullying in the amendments and that complaints of bullying be addressed in workplace policies. For more information on the proposed changes to the OHS act see pg. 9 of this edition of *The Advocate*. It's the employers responsibility to provide harassment free, safe workplaces. However, many of our members are still experiencing bullying. We have been working to have these issues resolved by talking to employers about the importance of creating respectful workplaces, and have been filing grievances to protect our members.

Your union continues to deal with the issue of privatization. We have met with Home Support workers across the province and have presented their input to government. Privatization is not the answer. We need to support and maintain a strong public health care system. Our campaign "Home Care - Keep it Public!" was successful in creating awareness about the importance of keeping health care in the public domain.

UPSE is currently gathering information and will be launching a campaign in the fall on workplace violence. This is a serious issue that our members are facing in their workplaces on a daily basis. Violence is not "part of your job" and should not be accepted in any form. We need to work together to promote workplace health and safety and ensure that members can perform their job duties in non-threatening work environments.

On a lighter note, our family fun day was a great success this summer. Over 1,200 members came to Shining Waters for a day of relaxation and enjoyment with their families. UPSE encourages membership activities like family fun day and loves to see members getting involved at all levels of union activity.

I want to thank you, the members of UPSE, for your support and encouragement. We have worked hard together to improve workplaces for the membership and for all Islanders.

Karen Jackson
President, UPSE

UPSE Executive Officers

President: Karen Jackson
kjackson@peiupse.ca

First Vice-President: Doug Ferguson
dferguson@peiupse.ca

Second Vice-President: Mark Arsenault
maarsenault@gov.pe.ca

Third Vice-President: Jim Ryan
jimryan@eastlink.ca

Secretary-Treasurer: Kevin Gotell
kgotell@peiupse.ca

Presidential Election, 2018

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 27, 2018**. Members are required to mail back their ballots by 4:00 p.m. on **September 26, 2018**. To ensure that you receive a ballot, please ensure your current contact information (home address) is up-to-date with the union (**call 902-892-5335**) or toll free (**1-800-897-8773**) or e-mail (**peiupse@peiupse.ca**)



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



Bryan Burt is Director of Local 13 and Chief Steward, and works in Network Operations with the province as a Technical Support.

The union received two nominations for the position of President by the nomination deadline on July 30, 2018. Karen Jackson and Bryan Burt are the candidates. **Note:** Members who have not received a ballot by **September 10, 2018** may call the office to have a duplicate ballot mailed to their home address. No duplicate ballots will be issued before September 10.

UPSE Women's Committee

The UPSE Women's Committee promotes the awareness of women's issues within UPSE and in the community. The committee encourages the participation of women at all levels of union activities and work towards the elimination of barriers to participation; and partners with other groups in the community that address similar issues.

The Women's Committee recently donated \$750 to Women's Network PEI and their work involving women and childcare, women and trades, and women and political leadership.

Women's Network PEI is a not-for-profit organization that works to strengthen and support the efforts of PEI women to improve the status of women in our society. The Women's Network:

- promotes the equality of women in PEI through feminist analysis and practice
- provides a forum for the voices of women in PEI
- provides opportunities for women to realize power, knowledge, skills, abilities, vision and financial security
- empowers women through the recognition of women's achievements and potential, and through listening to women's voices

UPSE invites the women of the union to participate in any and all future activities the Women's Committee schedules. For more information about how to get involved called the union office at **902-892-5335** or e-mail **peiupse@peiupse.ca**.



(L-R) Jillian Kilfoil (Executive Director, Women's Network PEI) and Dina DesRoches (CO-Chair, UPSE Women's Committee)

UPSE Summer Fun Day at Shining Waters Family Fun Park



I want to thank everyone for coming out to Shining Waters and taking part in UPSE's Family Fun Day! It's great to see so many members and their families having fun and enjoying this popular union event!

Karen Jackson,
President, UPSE

UPSE Wishes Tammy and Cathy All the Best in their Retirement

Tammy Laybolt worked at UPSE for 33 years in the role of Membership Records Coordinator. She always enjoyed welcoming new members to UPSE and encouraged members to sign their membership cards. She said "it was always an interesting job as there are a variety of tasks to do - no day is exactly the same from typing collective agreements and working with Labour Relations Officers through the negotiation process to helping the membership prepare for annual convention." Tammy added that "its been a pleasure to work with the membership and the staff at UPSE. I have been lucky to have great colleagues over the years and a great employer to work for and I'm so excited about the next chapter of my life."

For Cathy MacKinnon, who has retired after 12 years of service with UPSE as the Resource and Organizing Officer, she said "organizing new members and getting to know some of them during the organizing process has been a very rewarding experience." In her Resource role, she has had the pleasure of getting to know many of the members - from fielding calls about contract articles to answering members' questions about educational opportunities and providing emotional support when a member finds themselves in a difficult situation at work. Cathy is entering retirement on a positive note and said "I have had the privilege to work with some great people over the last twelve years here at UPSE, and I feel I learned something from each and every co-worker. In my heart I will always be an UPSE member." Karen Jackson, UPSE President, said "we will miss Tammy and Cathy's expertise at the UPSE office. Their commitment to the membership over the years was exemplary. I wish them both all the best in their retirement."



Pic: (L-R) Tammy Laybolt, Membership Records Coordinator, retires after 33 years of service with UPSE. Cathy MacKinnon, Resource and Organizing Officer, retires after 12 years of service with UPSE.

John Picketts Distinguished Contribution Award

This year's recipient of the John R. Picketts Distinguished Contribution Award is Rhonda Craig (Correctional Officer). Rhonda received the award and recognition for her 25 years of service at the Community and Correctional Services Employee Recognition Reception. Other members also received recognition for years of service including UPSE Director (Local 5), Steve Mollins for 30 years of service. Congratulations to all recipients.



Pic (L-R) Karen MacDonald (Director, Community and Correctional Services), Rhonda Craig (Correctional Officer), John Picketts and Jordan Brown (Minister of Justice and Public Safety and Attorney General).



Pic (L-R) Karen MacDonald (Director, Community and Correctional Services), Steve Mollins (Youth Justice Worker), and Jordan Brown (Minister of Justice and Public Safety and Attorney General).

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Pride Parade 2018!

UPSE was out in full colour supporting fellow Islanders at the annual Pride parade in Charlottetown. This was the largest Pride parade in PEI history with more than 160 groups registered.

The parade is not only about Pride in our community, but celebrating diversity and life in PEI while respecting differences amongst its citizens and visitors, and creating an inclusive experience for all.



Pic (L-R) Lynn Boyer (Chairperson, Membership Services Committee and Communications), Karen Jackson (UPSE President)

UPSE Thanks Firefighters

UPSE thanks the brave firefighters who have been (or are still) in Ontario this summer battling wildfires.



Four P.E.I. firefighters battling wildfires in Northern Ontario

Some of the fires are huge. The Parry Sound 33 fire covered over 11,000 hectares. Island firefighters were camping approximately 500 metres from one of the fires which meant no washrooms or typical comforts. Karen Jackson, UPSE President, congratulates the firefighters for joining the Ontario crews and lending a helping hand.

Bargaining

Garden Home and Whisperwood Villa

Bargaining update

Both bargaining units have successfully negotiated tentative agreements. Details of the tentative agreements were distributed to the membership in August with ratification votes scheduled for August 20, 2018. For further updates see the UPSE website (www.peiupse.ca).

Holland College Administrative and Support

Bargaining update

The collective agreement between UPSE and Holland College Administrative and Support expired on March 31, 2018. Teams met twice in preparation for negotiations and bargaining commenced on May 18. Teams met again for further bargaining in June with the next meeting scheduled for August 29, 2018 at the UPSE office.

All members are encouraged to provide input to the bargaining team members. The bargaining team will provide a progress update to the members after the

August 29 meeting.

Civil Service

Bargaining update

The collective agreement between the Government of PEI / WCB / IRAC and the PEI Union of Public Sector Employees expired on March 31, 2018. After receiving input from the members a package was assembled and will be exchanged with the employer in September. Bargaining dates are to be determined. Keep your eye on the UPSE website for updates (www.peiupse.ca).

Community Connections

Bargaining update

The collective agreement between UPSE and Community Connections expired on March 31, 2017. Teams met in November 2017 and then again in

January 2018 to resolve outstanding issues.

A tentative collective agreement between UPSE and Community Connections was agreed upon on May 17, 2018. Ratification kits are currently on hold as UPSE is awaiting the employer's response. The goal is to have the kits mailed out in late August, 2018.



Holland College Early Learning Centre

Bargaining update

The collective agreement between UPSE and Holland College Early Learning Centre is expiring on August 31, 2018.

The union is currently awaiting information from government pertaining to wage provisions. A notice to bargain has been sent to the employer. Proposal forms are being distributed and a bargaining team will be elected by the end of August, 2018.

Morell and Area Early Learning Centre

Bargaining update

The collective agreement between UPSE and Morell and Area Early Learning Centre expired on June 30, 2017.

The union is currently awaiting information from government pertaining to wage provisions. A notice to bargain has been sent to the employer. Bargaining is scheduled to get underway in late August.



See the UPSE Website for Bargaining Updates (www.peiupse.ca)

Grievances

Termination

Individual Grievance (Health PEI)

A member was terminated and UPSE contended that the employer did not follow the principles of progressive discipline in regard to the action. UPSE provided details of its concerns through the grievance process to work towards a solution with the employer.

UPSE and HPEI successfully resolved the grievance with the help of arbitrator George Filliter. The union worked diligently toward obtaining a settlement that was fair and agreeable to all the parties involved.

Clothing Allowance

Policy Grievance (Health PEI)

During the last round of negotiations health employees received a new workplace clothing allowance during the mediation/arbitration portion of collective bargaining. The union understood that this benefit was in addition to the existing uniform allowance and would be available to all LPNs, RCWs, PCWs and any worker who requires the care worker course. The employer is disagreeing, stating that addiction workers should not receive the allowance and further that there is only one allowance to be paid.

Further the employer is also arguing (under the protective foot wear article), that shoes which the employer requires members to wear for health and safety should not be covered. Having said all this the union set forth to file a grievance with regards to article 18 of the collective agreement.

UPSE is currently awaiting the employers response to our grievance and will continue to update the members as updates become available.

Abusing Management Rights

Policy Grievance (Community Connections)

UPSE has filed a grievance as of July 30 contending that Community Connections has abused its management rights. The employer is not granting proper days off and is not following the call back procedure. UPSE is awaiting a reply from the employer on this issue.

Termination

Individual Grievance (Civil Service)

UPSE contends that an employee of the provincial civil service has been terminated unjustly. The member asserts that the employer has confused the issue and has failed to address other relevant issues.

UPSE filed a grievance on August 1 and is awaiting a response from the employer.

Heat Warning and Precautions

UPSE reminds members and all Islanders to take precautions during hot and humid weather. Environment Canada has issued several heat warnings for Prince Edward Island this summer as temperatures have reached and surpassed 30 degrees Celsius.



Workers (both indoor and outdoor) are at risk for illness due to these conditions. Heat related disorders include sunburn, heat rash, heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat stroke. For more information on the signs and symptoms, treatment and prevention of the above see the Workers Compensation Board's Guide to Prevention of Heat Stress at Work on their website (<http://www.wcb.pe.ca/Information/Publications>).

It's the employer's duty (OHS Act, section 12) to ensure "that every reasonable precaution is taken to protect the occupational health and safety of persons at or near the workplace." See the Guide to Workplace Protocol in Hot Weather (<http://peiupse.ca/pdf/Hot%20Weather.pdf>) that the province is using as a guideline during hot and humid weather conditions (ref: Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers Inc). UPSE acknowledges the membership and all Islanders having to work in these extreme conditions.

Promoting Early Childhood Educators in Prince Edward Island

The PEI Union of Public Sector Employees is raising awareness about the importance of early childhood education in Prince Edward Island, and the need to better compensate Early Childhood Educators (ECEs).

The wages for *Early Childhood Educators* in government designated centres has increased less than \$1 per hour since 2010. The starting wage for an ECE in PEI who possesses a college diploma or university degree is \$15.61/hour. In 2010 the starting wage was \$15.00/hour. That's not a reasonable wage increase over an eight year period. And for those ECEs with less training the starting wage is even lower: \$14.05/hour for ECEs with a one year certificate, and \$12.48/hour for ECEs with three early childhood courses.

The provision of quality early childhood education is an essential component for a thriving society. ECEs play a pivotal role in the social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development of our children. Building a solid foundation in the early years sets the stage for future educational success. Also, by providing quality care for our children, ECEs, as a matter of consequence, allow more workers to join the labour force and contribute to the economy.



And so not only are there more people working because of ECEs, but businesses are also in a better position to operate and grow with an expanded labour force.

So it is essential that we take steps to increase the recruitment and retention of ECEs in Prince Edward Island. We can't afford to lose these valuable employees or to have up and coming ECEs veer away from this occupation because it lacks incentives. We need to invest in early childhood education so that ECEs are paid more in accordance to their skills and education; their role as nurturers and educators; and in regard to the vital contribution they make to our economy. And for the designated early years centres in PEI that are required to follow a provincial curriculum and have all their staff certified, this means enhancing the provincial wage grid on a more consistent basis to reflect the cost of living and the true value of these Early Childhood Educators.

Women's Committee Supports The Adventure Group

The UPSE Women's Committee is supporting *The Adventure Group* with a \$750 donation. The donation will go towards *The Adventure Group's* child care initiative. Their philosophy includes an adventure-based "learning by doing" approach, whereby participants are fully involved in the experience. The Adventure Group is a registered charitable, non-profit, experiential educational and training organization.



Pic: (L-R) Roxanne Carter-Thompson, (Executive Director of The Adventure Group), Dina DesRoches (CO-Chair, UPSE Women's Committee)

Workplace Harassment Policy Mandatory?

PEI's Occupational Health and Safety Act is presently being updated to include a definition of workplace harassment. UPSE provided feedback to the Workers Compensation Board via the stakeholder consultation process regarding the proposed changes.

UPSE strongly believes that the inclusion of harassment in the OHS act is needed. The proposed amendment includes a comprehensive definition of harassment as well as a requirement that employers adopt a policy to govern the workplace. Furthermore, the problem of workplace bullying is related to harassment. Public opinion and awareness regarding workplace bullying has certainly changed and the tolerance level for bullying is decreasing daily.

UPSE recommended that the WCB consider including a definition of bullying in the amendments and that complaints of bullying be addressed in workplace policies.

Harassment can often be associated in people's minds with a physical act causing physical harm. Bullying is often considered in lay person's terms as a verbal act that creates psychological harm. The definition of bullying, according to the International Labour Organization, is:

“...offensive behaviour through vindictive, cruel, malicious or humiliating attempts to undermine an individual or groups of employees through such activities as:

- *making life difficult for those who have the potential to do the bully's job better than the bully;*
- *shouting at staff to get things done;*
- *insisting that the bully's way of doing things is the only right way;*
- *refusing to delegate because the bully feels no one else can be trusted;*
- *punishing others by constant criticism or by removing their responsibilities for being too competent.”*

UPSE reinforced the CSA's Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace which includes guidance on how to create a workplace that does not create psychological harm.

Workplaces should be both harassment and bully free. UPSE has worked with government and a number of other workplaces in our province to at least aim to provide a bully free workplace. Numerous sessions of the Bully-Free Workplace program have been delivered to more than 1,500 workers in the province.

Through the input process UPSE encouraged the WCB to go as far as it can to provide a psychologically safe workplace in the province. The recent decision and WCB award in the Donovan case is the best example of how far we have come in this direction. The proposed amendments are simply another step forward. UPSE is working in coalition with Lisa Donovan, other unions, and the employer in an effort to ensure that these legislative changes are made.

Annual Labour Day Picnic and Barbecue (Federation of Labour)

Monday, September 3, 2018
11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Joseph Ghiz Memorial Park, Charlottetown

Drop by to celebrate Labour Day 2018!

There will be face painting, a magician and a bouncy house for children.

Hot Dogs, Corn, French Fries and more will be served.



UPSE Welcomes New Staff: Melissa Bruce and Norma Burns

The PEI Union of Public Sector Employees welcomes new staff members. Melissa Bruce is UPSE's Resource and Organizing Officer. Before joining the UPSE team Melissa worked at UPEI as an HR Staffing Officer.



Melissa Bruce is UPSE's new Resource and Organizing Officer.

In her role with UPSE Melissa will be helping members on a daily basis in a variety of ways. She answers general questions that members have about their collective agreements and determines if further action is required; she works with the Communications Officer in developing campaigns; administers the Health Development and Training Fund; and is the lead person responsible for identifying and implementing potential units to organize.



Norma Burns is UPSE's new Membership Records Coordinator.

Norma Burns is UPSE's new Membership Records Coordinator.

Before joining the UPSE team Norma worked with the City of Charlottetown as an HR Executive Assistant. In her role with UPSE Norma will be helping members by maintaining the membership database, working with personnel officers in bargaining unit workplaces to ensure

membership records are up to date, preparing materials for the annual general convention, and, typing collective agreements for various bargaining units, minutes of meetings and other union documents.

Karen Jackson, UPSE President, says she is thrilled to have both Melissa and Norma join the dedicated staff at UPSE. Jackson says "our staff works hard to serve the membership every day and I know Melissa and Norma will support the members in carrying out their job duties as we work together to improve workplaces across Prince Edward Island."

Douglas McMaster Memorial Occupational Health and Safety Award

Mark Arsenault, UPSE's Second Vice President and a Habitat/Wildlife Technician with Communities, Land and Environment, has received the 2018 Douglas McMaster Memorial OHS Award. The award is presented each year during national public service week and celebrates individual or team achievements by government employees in the promotion and development of health and safety.



Pic (L-R): Karen Jackson (President, UPSE), and Mark Arsenault (UPSE Second Vice President)

Stewards' Conference

UPSE held its annual Stewards' Conference on June 1, 2018 in Charlottetown. It's important for our Stewards to network and to receive ongoing education in regard to the latest workplace issues. Stewards are vital contributors to our union. They help co-workers deal with difficult situations, ensure the collective agreement is being followed, improve democracy in the workplace, and provide a bridge between supervisors and employees.

This year's conference was a great success. Presenters Kim Turner, Q.C. and Andrew Nielsen (Pink Larkin) touched on several key issues including violence in the workplace; social media use, cannabis legalization and demonstrated equivalency. Mike Lyriotokis' (Co-chair, Stewards Council) contributions to UPSE were also highlighted in lieu of his retirement.



UPSE's Popular Annual Golf Tournament Now Full.

UPSE's annual golf tournament is now full. The first twelve teams to contact the union have received bookings.

This year UPSE golfers will be playing at the beautiful [Brudenell River Golf Course](#).



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