

# THE ADVOCATE

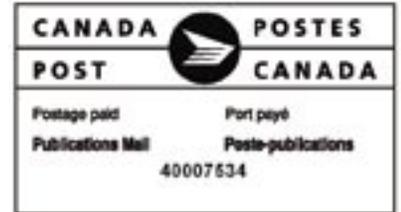
## Prince Edward Island Union of Public Sector Employees

### Inside:

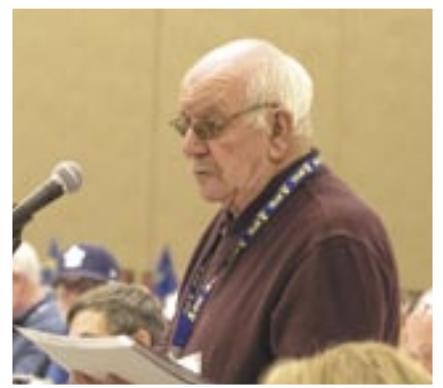
**President's Message pg. 2**

**Report on 57th Annual Convention pg. 3**

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## THE ADVOCATE Winter 2019

*Report on  
Convention*



## Dear Members,

Welcome to the winter edition of *The Advocate*. Your union's 57th Annual Convention was a success. Delegates passed key resolutions and there was healthy debate on the issues. We also celebrated paying off the mortgage to the UPSE office which was renovated in 2009. This was an important investment for our members and we remained steadfast in meeting our financial objectives. See the full report on convention beginning on page 3.



Karen Jackson  
President, UPSE

There are many issues facing the membership as we move forward in 2019 and Early Childhood Education is one of them. We have been and will continue to raise awareness about the need to better compensate early child-care workers in Prince Edward Island. The average wage in Prince Edward Island for these workers is \$15.60/hour which is significantly lower than the average wage in the province. The provision of early childhood education is essential to our society. Early child-care workers 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. Further, by looking after and educating our children, early child-care workers allow more people to join the labour force and contribute to the economy. For these reasons and many others it is important that we take steps to increase recruitment and retention of early child-care workers in Prince Edward Island. We can't afford to lose these valuable workers or have future workers change their career path because the job lacks proper wages and incentives. Instead, we need to invest in early childhood education so that workers are paid more in accordance to their skills and education, their role as nurturers and educators, and the vital contribution they make to our economy. This means that the province will have to significantly enhance the provincial wage grid and consistently ensure that pay levels reflect the true nature of this occupation.

Another issue which members have expressed concern about is Health PEI's new flu shot policy. The policy recommends that health care workers get an annual flu shot. The policy also says that workers who haven't had a flu shot must wear a surgical mask if there are confirmed cases of the flu, and if they are working in close proximity to patients. The mask rule is simply not necessary. Recent cases in other provinces have shown that wearing a mask is not an effective preventative measure in regard to the transmission of influenza. So being forced

to wear a mask is unnecessary and it singles out those health care workers who have chosen not to get the flu vaccine which is their personal choice. I want to thank UPSE members and their delegates at convention for their participation. Give us a call anytime or drop by our office for a visit. I look forward to seeing you.

*Thank You,*

*Karen Jackson, UPSE President*

### UPSE Executive Officers

President: Karen Jackson  
kjackson@peiupse.ca

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

Second Vice-President: Mark Arsenaault  
maarsenaault@gov.pe.ca

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

Secretary-Treasurer: Kevin Gotell  
kgotell@peiupse.ca

### UPSE Staff

Hans Connor LLB: Labour Relations Officer / Lawyer  
hconnor@peiupse.ca

Troy Warren: Labour Relations Officer  
twarren@peiupse.ca

Andrew Jack: Labour Relations Officer  
ajack@peiupse.ca

Melissa Bruce: Resource & Organizing Officer  
mbruce@peiupse.ca

Blair Weeks: Research, Education and Policy Analyst  
bweeks@peiupse.ca

Mark Barrett: Communications & Campaigns Officer  
mbarrett@peiupse.ca

Norma Burns: Membership Records Coordinator  
nburns@peiupse.ca

Mary MacLean: Education and Meetings Coordinator  
peiupse@peiupse.ca

Jackie McCaughey: Accounting and Technology  
Coordinator  
jmccaughey@peiupse.ca

## Report on PEI UPSE's 57th Annual Convention

UPSE's 57th Annual Convention was a great success. President Karen Jackson delivered her yearly report to delegates, resolutions were introduced and debated, the auditor's report was presented, guest speakers brought important information to the membership, and UPSE held its second annual Women's Convention which was hosted by the UPSE Women's Committee.

At the Women's Convention Roxanne Carter Thompson and Rae Sherren spoke to delegates on behalf of *The Adventure Group* about their services such as the life and work management program which is geared toward young Moms on social assistance. They also conducted a team building exercise with delegates. Gloria Dennis from PEI Family Violence Prevention Services presented a series of videos on how to recognize and intervene in cases of family violence. The videos show different scenarios involving types of violence bystanders might see at work or in public, e.g., sexual assault, abuse of older adults, child abuse, online harassment, or verbal abuse. UPSE was a proud gold sponsor of the videos which were released by the City of Charlottetown and PEI Family Violence Prevention

services. President Jackson acknowledged the work of the UPSE



Karen Jackson (President, UPSE)

Women's Committee and reinforced how important it is for the union to be supporting women's issues in Prince Edward Island.

At UPSE's 57th Annual Convention, President Jackson reported to the

delegation on activities that have taken place over the year. She reported that the UPSE Executive met on a regular basis since last convention and UPSE remains focused on eliminating violence in the workplace, fighting against the privatization of public services, establishing fair and equitable contracts and engaging members through education and open communication. She thanked UPSE's Board of Directors, Stewards, committees, staff and delegates. She spoke about UPSE's success and continued work on the campaign front. "We continue to work with the national union on phase 2 of the All Together Now campaign which builds upon the success of phase 1 and the Fairness Express, which used our members to engage in one-on-one conversations with Canadians about how income

inequality was affecting them." Phase 2 of the campaign highlights the important role unions play in creating a fairer country and that unions still matter to all Canadians, even to those people who aren't part of one. She said the campaign includes a television commercial, a new website with fact sheets and videos, an educational component, a dedicated social media presence and t-shirts, tuques, decals and tattoos. Jackson also talked about the development of a project to engage millennials and establish what unions mean to them. She said "we have been concerned about how the generational shift is taking place where our members work, as well as how the broader labour movement is responding. We wanted to find ways to move the union forward in its communications with younger workers."

President Jackson spoke about the importance of UPSE belonging to the P.E.I. Federation of Labour. She explained that "the federation is a coalition with other Unions across the province, where we discuss labour related issues that challenge our members. We also meet with the Minister of Labour, as a group, to ensure he is aware of the issues. Meeting together gives Labour a stronger voice with the many diverse issues we deal with. Lobbying is also an important aspect of the Federation, we have been vocal on the EI zoning and establishing a National Pharmacare program, as well as

many other issues.” UPSE has been fighting against encroaching privatization in Prince Edward Island. UPSE partnered with the PEI Nurses Union to deliver a campaign in response to the provincial government’s recent decision to contract out to Medavie, a private company, to deliver some of the home care services in Prince Edward Island. Jackson said, “we acknowledge and respect that paramedics receive appropriate training for their essential role as emergency medical technicians, however, our concern is that they do not have the required experience or training to provide the same level of care offered by current home care employees.” The campaign consisted of both television and print ads. The TV ads featured our members in their role as home care professionals providing care in a variety of home care scenarios. The ads build awareness about the important work our members perform in home care and reinforce the message that home care is a valued public service that should be kept public!

UPSE questioned government for investing tax dollars in a private company to provide public health care services that could be delivered using existing public sector employees. Many of our members providing home care services have skills and abilities that are not being fully utilized. So why not use these public health care workers for new initiatives and take advantage of their complete scope of practice?

UPSE also argued that the trend toward privatizing health care services is not in the public’s interest because with privatization comes the loss of transparency and accountability of the service provided. Therefore, any expansion of our health care system, or any new initiatives or programs, should be delivered through the public health care system.

In regard to other privatization issues UPSE lobbied government to ensure that the sale of cannabis is administered by the public sector. The decision regarding whether the sale of cannabis is private, or public is at the discretion of the provinces, and most recently Ontario changed its

## Privatization

original plan and is now authorizing the private sector to oversee sales. UPSE understood the value of promoting the public model in Prince Edward Island and we focused on the importance of product safety and social responsibility. We are pleased that the government chose to use the public model and is committed to a long-term financial investment in harm reduction, education and awareness. Jackson said she was pleased to meet the new members and welcome them to UPSE at the cannabis staff retail training sessions. This gave her the opportunity to acquaint members with the programs and services available to them through

UPSE, and to explain how their union protects their rights under their collective agreement and negotiates fair and equitable contracts on their behalf.

President Jackson addressed convention delegates about the pervasive problem of violence in the workplace. She explained that “there must be a shift from a culture reacting to violence in the workplace, to a culture of violence prevention.” Prevention protects workers, improves patient/client care and makes the care environment a more positive place for everyone. Policies that directly affect the delivery of services for UPSE’s front-line workers need to be evaluated and necessary measures need to be put in place to ensure the safety of the members. Front line workers need to be heard and feel supported by their employer, with the many challenges facing them. Decision makers need to be informed and aware of the issues in the front lines and be quicker to respond when these issues arise. It is very frustrating for UPSE Labour Relations Officers and especially UPSE members, when they are continuously bringing the same issues forward, being told that it is being addressed, only to find out that the issues have not been addressed and the only recourse is to file a grievance which is a lengthy procedure.

Jackson asserted that “violence in our worksites is at its highest level ever, and the need for more staff and resources is of

vital importance in our Long-term care facilities, hospitals, mental health facilities, correctional facilities, and our group homes. It is also prevalent in many of our office settings throughout government.” She said “UPSE is committed to bringing an awareness campaign to educate the public on the realities facing our frontline workers. We have been gathering data on this issue from our members and we continue to urge them to inform our office when they encounter violence of any kind in their worksites.”

President Jackson also spoke to the delegation about staffing issues especially in Health PEI. She said “many of our members are being forced to work double shifts, because of the lack of staff to call in for replacement. If they refuse, they are threatened with disciplinary measures. We have been meeting with the employer and we have filed a court injunction to have this practice stopped.” UPSE realizes that members are expected to stay when there are storms or there may be an influenza outbreak for example. In the past, UPSE members have demonstrated their dedication and commitment in these situations, but when the employer forces members to staff shifts because of inadequate staffing, that is where UPSE draws the line. The employer needs to staff appropriately, that is the employer’s responsibility.

President Jackson talked to the delegates about UPSE’s efforts on the education front. She spoke about UPSE’s newest course called Harmony and Understanding in the Multi-Generational Workplace. She said, “the aim of the course is to enhance awareness about different generations at work and to build harmony and understanding so that everyone benefits.” Last year UPSE introduced a new course called Mental Health in the Workplace and, also delivered Violence and the Workplace, Stress in the Workplace, Attendance Management, Steward Training (Levels 1 & 2), and Welcome to UPSE - including a tailored version of Welcome to UPSE for Holland College. UPSE also continued to work with government in delivering the bully-free workplace initiative in both Health and the Civil Service. The more UPSE educates the membership the more our work together will benefit workplaces across Prince Edward Island.

President Jackson updated the membership on collective bargaining and membership engagement. She thanked the members on the negotiating teams and UPSE’s Labour Relations Officers for their efforts and adherence to the principles of fair collective bargaining. In regard to membership engagement she said “the members of a union are what makes a union strong. We work each and every day to keep the membership

well informed. We talk with our members, offer them support, and address their concerns in the workplace. Membership engagement is an important part of our success and this includes reaching out to our newest and youngest members. Our website contains a wealth of information and is updated on daily basis; we distribute our newsletters (The Accent) to the workplace, and our quarterly publication (The Advocate) to your homes; we also send out news bulletins via our mass e-mail database.” She said “UPSE has most recently developed a pamphlet that outlines our programs and services for members and we can send copies to your workplace upon request. We will be exploring the use of social media in the near future as well to keep in touch and get our message out there. ”

President Jackson also spoke to the delegation about the importance of championing social issues. She said that “we need to give a voice to those that feel they have no voice. We have been supporting the need for paid domestic violence leave for the past 3 years and I am proud that we were one of the driving forces for Bill 116 which amends the *Employment Standards Act* to include three paid and seven unpaid days leave for Islanders who are experiencing domestic violence, intimate partner violence, or sexual violence in their personal relationships.

We lobbied for 5 paid days, but 3 certainly is a step in the right direction, and we can continue to lobby to be in line with other provinces that have brought this legislation forward.”

Jackson added that “UPSE has also partnered with Cooke Insurance by supporting the prevention of family violence in PEI. As a gold sponsor, we supported a series of training videos planned by the Purple Ribbon Task Force on Family Violence Prevention. The videos are being used widely in PEI and Canada and are designed for workplace training, to educate the public and cover different kinds of violence you might witness as a bystander. These videos are a major contribution to workplace training and to public understanding of what we can all do to make preventing violence all our business. I am proud we sponsored these powerful videos bringing public awareness to this serious issue. UPSE has also made submissions for the minimum wage review, whistle blower legislation and changes to the OHS act to include the definition of Workplace Harassment for the WCB. It is imperative that employees across this province have recourse if they are experiencing workplace bullying at their worksite, and that employers have policies in place to address this.”

President Jackson concluded her report to

the delegation by thanking the membership for their support in her re-election as President. She said “I want you to know that I always have, and always will, put the membership first. I am here on your behalf and am committed to working with our executive,



Larry Brown, President, NUPGE

working Islanders.”

Guest speakers at this year’s convention included Larry Brown, the President of the *National Union of Public and General Employees*, and Krista Williams, the Manager of Client Services for *Managed Health Care Services Inc.* (MHSCI).

Larry Brown spoke to convention about the rise of right-wing movements in the world. He said Donald Trump validates the worst in people and denigrates the media. He also mentioned Brazil’s new President, Jair Bolsonaro, who is known as a far-right, pro-gun, populist. He touched on Ontario’s new Premier, Doug Ford, who decided to drastically reduce the size of Toronto’s city council as one of his first moves in office – and declared he would

board of directors and you, the members, in moving this great union forward for the benefit of the membership and all

use the notwithstanding clause to achieve his ends. Brown also stated that unions will come under attack from the Coalition Avenir Québec government recently elected and that we should be weary of New Brunswick’s new provincial government whose premier is a fiscal hawk. Larry had met in Geneva, prior to convention, with Public Services International, a trade union federation representing 20 million working women and men who deliver vital public services in 163 countries. They discussed the recent growth of right-wing movements and the moves many of these governments are taking to limit democracy.

Brown said we should not be surprised by how many people under 35 have little trust in the importance of the democratic system because our system is largely problematic. We need to think about why people are losing faith in democracy. He said we have an opportunity in PEI to improve democracy by choosing proportional representation. By improving democracy we make it more likely that people will participate. People become more engaged when they know their voice can make a difference.

Krista Williams addressed the delegates and all UPSE members on the savings they can achieve through the MHCSI *Preferred Supplementary Pharmacy Benefits Program*. Krista explained that

with the MHCSI drug program, members and their eligible dependents are entitled to coverage of up to \$3.00 per prescription. She also explained that members can enjoy great discounts on front store purchases at Lawtons Drugs with the *Lawtons Client Group Partner Discount Card*. UPSE members can enroll in the program by going to [www.mhcsi.ca/enroll](http://www.mhcsi.ca/enroll) and contacting the UPSE office for their group name and password.



Krista Williams, Manager of Client Services for MHCSI

There was healthy debate around the resolutions introduced at this year's convention. Local 18 submitted a resolution proposing a four-year term for President of UPSE instead of the current three-year term. Members in favour of this resolution asserted that a three-year term is not enough time for the President to become familiar with the position and to develop relationships with key stakeholders. It was also pointed out that there would be cost savings to move to a four-year term. Members opposed to the resolution reminded the delegation that the term had already been changed before from a two-year term to a three-year term, and that three-years should give the President enough time to establish relationships and guide the union in a positive direction. The

delegation weighed the information presented and decided against the proposed four-year term for President.

UPSE's Board of Directors submitted a resolution on bullying or harassing behaviour. The resolution states that members found to have been engaged in

bullying or harassing behavior in the course of any union or union related activity will be required to successfully complete training in the areas of sensitivity, anger management, conflict resolution or similar programs prior to offering for or holding any elected office within UPSE or taking part in any Union activity where the complainant(s) may be present. This strong stance against bullying and harassment was carried by the delegation.

In 2009 a 0.25 cent dues increase was implemented to pay for renovations to the UPSE building and UPSE has now completely paid for these renovations and is mortgage free. In turn, the Finance Committee submitted a

resolution to invest \$30,000 annually from the 0.25 cent dues increase approved in 2009, to a *Building Renovation Fund* for future maintenance and upkeep of the UPSE building beginning in the 2018-19 fiscal year. The resolution also proposed that the balance of the 0.25 cents dues increase approved in 2009, be used to fund up to one more \$1000 and three more \$500 UPSE bursaries, and that any remaining funds be allocated in addition to the next fiscal years' UPSE has a Heart campaign. The delegation carried this resolution and in doing so protects the membership's investment in the UPSE building and, also builds on UPSE's bursary program and the UPSE Has a Heart campaign.

Local 18 submitted a resolution for UPSE to develop and implement a social media communication strategy and report results by next convention. Delegates supported this resolution and suggested it was important especially for younger members who rely more

on social media for information. Delegates also said social media will help promote UPSE's campaigns more effectively and that UPSE should look at how other *(continued on pg. 8)*



Karen Jackson, UPSE President, Larry Brown, President NUPGE, and Kevin Gotell, UPSE Secretary Treasurer

jurisdictions are using social media for input. Delegates carried further resolutions with great support on creating more subsidized housing for PEI residents, lobbying the government to remove tax on gasoline and diesel, developing a policy to automatically grant the waiving of dues for members absent from the workplace due to injury or disability, and changing the constitution so that the election of co-chair and alternate co-chair for the Steward's Council shall be held no earlier than seventy-five days following the conclusion of the annual convention every two years in even numbered years.

Chrissy Murphy was named UPSE's Member of the Year for 2018. Lynn Bovyer was pleased to nominate Chrissy, a long-time activist who everyone knows. Lynn called Chrissy the "swag" lady and said Chrissy is virtually everywhere whether it's the UPSE golf tournament, Family Fun Day at Shining Waters, UPSE Christmas parties, UPSE has a Heart, the Bursary and Scholarship program or handing out gifts to members at convention. Chrissy has served as a Local Director, Chief Steward, Chair of the PR Committee and has participated in numerous rallies, campaigns and educational. Chrissy is a true activist.

Chrissy thanked Lynn and the membership in receiving the award. She said that she is a proud UPSE member and she strives to look after her fellow members in the workplace. She said it was a real honour to be chosen as Member of the Year!



L-R: Lynn Bovyer (Chair, Membership Services and Communications Committee), Chrissy Murphy (UPSE Member of the Year), and Karen Jackson (President, UPSE).

Elections for the positions of Second Vice President and Secretary Treasurer were scheduled to take place at convention, however, both Mark Arsenault's (UPSE Second Vice President) and

Kevin Gotell's (UPSE Secretary Treasurer) nominations went uncontested. President Jackson thanked Mark and Kevin for their hard work in their respective roles and said that she looks forward to working with them during their new term of office with UPSE.

Your union made several donations at



L-R: Edna Reid (Cooke Insurance), Jennifer Evans (General Manager, Stingray) and Karen Jackson (President, UPSE).

convention to worthy organizations and causes. UPSE in partnership with Cooke Insurance donated a total of \$5000 to the following organizations: Montague Lions Club Toy Project (\$500); Southern Kings & Queens Food Bank (\$500); Salvation Army/Summerside Food Bank (\$500); Santa's Angels (\$500); Souris Lions Club (\$500); Caring Cupboard – Bloomfield (\$500); Upper Room Food Bank (\$500); Toys for Tots (\$1000); and the Esther Finkle Fund (\$500).

UPSE is proud to be affiliated with the *Canadian Labour Congress*, the *PEI Federation of Labour*, and the *National Union of Public and General Employees*. At convention UPSE had the support of fraternal from right across Canada.

Larry Brown (President, NUPGE)

Alex Furlong (Director, Atlantic Region, CLC)

Serge Landry (Representative, Atlantic Region, CLC)

AL Mullin (First Vice President, NBUPPE)

Susie Proulx Daigle (President, NBUPPE)

Carle Pursey (President, PEI Federation of Labour)

Arlene Sedlickas (General Vice President, NAPE)

Leonard Gallant (Vice-President / Acting President, CUPE)



L-R: Susie Proulx Daigle (President, NBUPPE), Karen Jackson (President, UPSE), and AL Mullin (First Vice President, NBUPPE)

# Thank you for making a difference for all Islanders. UPSE Salutes the 2018 Retirees!

UPSE congratulated its retirees at the 57th Annual Convention. They deserve our thanks for their contribution to our society and for making the Island a better place to live and work. Retirement is a milestone in one's life. There were years of dedication and hard work, and now UPSE retirees are embarking on new challenges and adventures. Some will find work in new areas or take advantage of opportunities and dreams that may have went unfulfilled; others will use their extra time to recreate, relax and spend more time with family. Retirement is a significant achievement and celebration; it marks the beginning of a new phase of life. The Union of Public Sector Employees congratulates its 2018 retirees for their hard work and dedication to Islanders.

***You've made Islanders and your union proud!***

Stephen Band, [Highway Safety](#)  
Wilfred Banks, [Corrections](#)  
Lillian Clow, [Home Care](#)  
Teresa Craswell, [Prince Edward Home](#)  
Jane Duchene, [Highway Safety](#)  
Nora Dymont, [Summerset Manor](#)  
Ethel Ellsworth, [Community Inclusions](#)  
Doreen Eynon, [Income Support](#)  
Ernest Gallant, [Strait Crossing Bridge Ltd.](#)  
Louise Gallant, [Prince Edward Home](#)  
Brian Gillis, [Fisheries](#)  
Donna Gillis, [Beach Grove Home](#)  
Robert Glover, [Policy and Evaluation](#)  
Katherine Lelacheur, [Dental Health](#)  
Mike Lyriotokis, [Child and Family Services](#)  
Eric MaCarthur, [Planning and Inspection](#)

Janice MacCormac, [Environmental Health](#)  
Donald MacDonald, [Charlottetown Centre](#)  
Hubert MacIsaac, [Tourism Development](#)  
Doris MacKinnon, [Addictions](#)  
Janice MacKinnon, [IRAC](#)  
Nancy MacLean, [Beach Grove Home](#)  
Charlene Martin, [Kings County Hospital](#)  
Sean Mooney, [Properties and Surveys](#)  
David Murphy, [Beach Grove Home](#)  
Terri Noye-Gallant, [Prince County Hospital](#)  
Charles OBrien, [Land and Environment](#)  
George Piercey, [Agriculture](#)  
Eric Quigley, [Liquor Control Commission](#)  
Terry Roach, [Government Garage](#)  
Patsy Somers, [Addictions](#)



President Karen Jackson (left) congratulates Doris MacKinnon (Addictions) for her contribution to Islanders.

## UPSE Bursary Winners

UPSE knows how important it is to offer bursaries to students attending college or university each year. Your union encourages education and recognizes students working toward a degree or professional designation.

Sydney Ford is this year's winner of the Laurie Jenkins Scholarship valued at \$1000, and Julie Daniels is the winner of the Julie MacKay Bursary valued at \$500.

UPSE expanded the program this year to include three extra bursaries worth \$500 and one extra bursary worth \$1,000. Congratulations to this year's winners!



(L-R) Julie Daniels, Jacob MacDonald, Amber Hill, Brook Smallman, Chrissy Murphy (Chair, Public Relations and Recreation / Convention Committee), Sydney Ford, Jared Nendarto and Nickolas Ramsay.

Winners not in the pictures are: Abdallah Taha, Marry Taha, David Miller, Katelyn Anthony, Amanda Myers, Ellen MacLean and Maxwell Jefferson.

## Harmony and Understanding in the Multi-Generational Workplace



UPSE members attend the latest educational offered by your union called Harmony and Understanding in the Multi-Generational Workplace. The course presents the profiles of a number of generations in the modern workforce from Baby Boomers (51-70 years), to Generation X (36-50 years), Millennials (22-35 years), and Mature Generation Z (17-21 years). Members learn and discuss the best ways for the generations to work together in the many worksites in which UPSE members are employed.

## NUPGE Advisory Committee on Women's Issues Supports ATN Campaign



The Co-Chair of UPSE's Women's Committee, Dina DesRoches, attends the National Union's *Advisory Committee on Women's Issues* meeting in Ottawa. From left to right are: Sylvia Melanson (NBU), Sandra Mullen (NSGEU), Dina DesRoches (PEI UPSE), Yvonne Whiting (HSAA), and Maggie Wakeford (OPSEU). They are holding t-shirts in support of the *All Together Now* campaign which is about unions fighting for fairness for everyone. We are working with our allies to find exciting ways to strengthen the movement for a fairer country, a country where people are treated as valuable resources not a cheap, disposable workforce.

## Health PEI Double Shifts

UPSE members in Health PEI are experiencing pressure from the employer to work double shifts. UPSE has filed grievances to have this situation resolved and has reminded the employer that under the collective agreement no employee is required to work a double shift without their consent. However, the employer has been requiring Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs), Resident Care Workers (RCWs) and Patient Care Workers (PCWs) at the end of their shifts to stay and work double shifts due to staffing shortages.

This situation has been occurring on an ongoing basis in the province's hospitals, long term care and acute care facilities, and it puts health care workers in a very difficult situation. They feel obliged to work the double shift even if they don't want to. Some staff who have chosen not to work a double shift were disciplined. We have been listening to our members and they are telling us that they feel they have no choice but to work the double shift. This is a clear violation of the collective agreement.

It's important that the employer listen to the valid concerns of front-line workers in the health care system. We need to work together to ensure that our hospitals and care facilities are safe for both workers and patients/residents. It's not in anyone's best interest to maintain a policy that relies on overworking employees. Staff need to be alert and performing to the very best of their ability when providing care for our loved ones. Is it reasonable or safe to ask an employee to work a double shift after they just finished working an eight or twelve-hour shift? I think it's imperative that an employee can freely choose to say no in this situation.

Staff also need proper protection from the perils of their work environment. They are required to assist, move and lift patients/residents on a regular basis and are also exposed to incidences of workplace violence in these situations and others. In 2017 the health and social services sector had the highest percentage of workplace injuries (27.2%) over and above every other industry grouping in Prince Edward Island.

Front-line health care workers are exposed to a variety of injuries including sprains, strains, tears, bruises and contusions – and these injuries are even more likely to occur when workers are tired or not as alert. It's essential that the employer adhere to policies and collective agreement provisions that put workplace safety first.

UPSE has met with the employer on several occasions to discuss this matter; we have filed grievances to ensure the provisions of the collective agreement are followed; and we have met with our members who are telling us directly that change needs to happen. The employer must respect the decision of a worker to say "no" to working a double shift. The worker clearly has the right to say no, and, should not be subjected to any form of coercion in making their decision. I understand that Health PEI needs to ensure they have employees scheduled to work shifts; however, they must accomplish this task while respecting the provisions of the collective agreement and ensuring the health and safety of all concerned.

**DID  
YOU  
KNOW ?**



Did you know that UPSE members in Civil Service / IRAC / WCB and Health PEI are granted one day paid leave (on a day mutually agreed) on the 25th anniversary of employment.

Members are also granted one day paid leave every 5 years after the 25th anniversary. This provision is in recognition of a member's long standing service.

## Bargaining Update

### Community Connections

#### *Bargaining update*

Community Connections Inc. has signed a new collective agreement. The new contract is for three years and replaces the former which expired on March 31, 2017.



**Top L-R:** Frank Costa (Executive Director, Community Connections), Karen Campbell (Lawyer, Cox & Palmer), Angie Mallett (Day Services employee), Troy Warren (UPSE Labour Relations Officer), Cathy Aylward (Residential Services employee).

**Bottom L-R:** Karen Jackson (UPSE President), Pam Montgomery (President, Board of Directors, Community Connections).

### Holland College Administrative and Support

The bargaining teams began negotiating on May 18 and then met again in June and August. A deal was not reached and the parties agreed to proceed to conciliation with hopes of finding an agreement on the proposed changes and improvements to the collective agreement.

To date the team has fought hard to ensure a fair and equitable deal for the

members in the face of the employers demands for take aways. Conciliation took place in January 2019. The teams have not as yet been able to reach an agreement through conciliation. The employer continues to maintain its position that it must diminish member sick leave to a fraction of what it once was. Additionally, there is a significant gap in the wage increase offered and what has been requested by the membership. See ([www.pei-upse.ca](http://www.pei-upse.ca)) for updates as they become available.

### Holland College Early Learning Centre

#### *Bargaining update*

Negotiations began on October 9, 2018 and a tentative deal was reached on October 16th. The membership ratified the package in February with strong support. The negotiating team believes that they were successful at addressing key concerns with the employer during negotiations. Members will be receiving retro pay for salary increases in the near future.

### Civil Service/IRAC/WCB

#### *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 completed in June, 2018. Bargaining commenced in December of 2018 with teams meeting three times. Teams are meeting again in February and March. See ([www.peiupse.ca](http://www.peiupse.ca)) for updates as they become available.

### Community Inclusions

#### *Bargaining update*

The collective agreement between Community Inclusions Limited and the PEI Union of Public Sector Employees will expire on March 31, 2019. UPSE will send a notice to bargain by February 28, 2019.

### Morell and Area Early Learning Centre

#### *Bargaining update*

The Morell and Area Early Learning Centre has signed a new collective agreement. Bargaining commenced in August, 2018, and a tentative agreement was reached in October of 2018. The agreement was ratified in November with unanimous support from the membership.



Pic: Karen Jackson (UPSE President), Crystal Palmer (Board Chair, Morell and Area Early Learning Centre), and Hans Connor (UPSE Labour Relations Officer).

## Grievance Update

### Double Shift

#### *Policy Grievance (Health PEI)*

UPSE has filed a grievance under article 14.28 of the collective agreement which outlines that no employee shall be required to work a double shift without his/her consent. The employer has been asking employees at the end of their shifts to work double shifts saying that no one else is available. Employees then feel obliged to take the shift even if they don't want to. UPSE contends that this is a clear violation of the collective agreement.

### Unjust Discipline

#### *Individual Grievance (Holland College Faculty)*

A member was disciplined for allegedly not following proper safety procedures. UPSE contends that the employer has not shown there was a violation and that safe work procedures were followed. UPSE also asserts that the case is not a matter for disciplinary action. The resolution sought is that the employer remove the discipline from the member's file.

### Denied Overtime

#### *Individual Grievance (Health PEI)*

UPSE has filed two individual grievances at Step II of the collective agreement contending that members are owed overtime pay for hours worked. The members were paid overtime for mandatory training and then paid straight time for a shift beginning less than seven hours later. UPSE asserts that because the second shift began less than seven hours after the previous shift the employer must pay overtime.

### Influenza Policy

#### *Policy Grievance (Health PEI)*

Multiple unions have filed grievances with Health PEI over their influenza policy. The policy outlines that members must wear a mask if they have not had an influenza shot and there is a confirmed outbreak. It is the member's choice to get a flu shot or not. They should not be identified by being forced to wear a mask. Further, cases in other provinces have shown that wearing a mask is not an effective preventative measure in regard to the transmission of influenza. So requiring members to wear masks is not warranted. UPSE met with the employer in January and outlined concerns with this policy and argues it should not be universally applied. UPSE awaits the employer's response.

### Termination

#### *Individual Grievance (Health PEI)*

A permanent employee applied for a Leave of Absence to take a career advancing temporary position. The employee moved into the new position but their request for leave was denied. UPSE contends that the employer did not make reasonable attempts to grant the leave such as seeing if the job could be back filled. A grievance was filed at Step 1. The employer has responded by allowing the employee, who is in the temporary position, to apply to any job as if they were permanent upon completion of leave. All parties were satisfied with this resolution.

### Failure to Post Positions

#### *Policy Grievance (Civil Service)*

UPSE has filed a grievance with the Department of Family and Human Services as the employer has failed to post and fill at least 10 permanent positions. There are also temporary positions which should have been posted over a year ago according to the collective agreement. Additionally the classifications for new positions have been waiting for over a year. The union has asked that the employer post these positions immediately and make all employees whole for any losses they may have incurred.

## TV Ads Promoting UPSE Membership

UPSE promoted the membership in both the private and public sectors through holiday tv ads which ran in December 2018, and January 2019. Every day across Prince Edward Island UPSE members in both the private and public sectors are hard at work helping Islanders. They take great pride in making a positive difference for people in our communities. UPSE members make PEI a better place to live and work every day through their contribution to the health, safety and well being of all Islanders.





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**Please contact:** *Melissa Bruce, UPSE Resource and Organizing Officer, 902-892-5335, toll free 1-800-897-8773 or e-mail her at [mbruce@peiupse.ca](mailto:mbruce@peiupse.ca)*



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