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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

NUFA Communications Committee



THE NUFA NEWS

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With the holiday season fast approaching, it is time to reflect on a difficult year of bargaining and efforts to reach agreement on a new contract. CASBU has been without a contract since May 1, 2010—much, much too long. Thankfully, the CASBU membership has had a stalwart team at the helm to defend your interests. Led by chief negotiator, Mark Crane, this team of committed individuals has worked tirelessly writing and re-writing language, exchanging emails, phone calls, drafting communications, and setting up meetings, blogs, and Facebook pages. They've gathered statistics, analyzed trends, created proposals, kept abreast of settlements around the province and prepared cogent rationales and arguments to help the administration understand why it must acknowledge, respect and appropriately remunerate the CASBU academic staff for their excellent contributions to the university.

As you read on in order to remain informed, consider attending the NUFA Social on **Thursday, December 9th (5:30-8:30pm) at Zorba's Grill (561 Lakeshore Drive, North Bay)** to say hello or dropping a note to nufaoffice@gmail.com in support. This is a team of which you can be proud.

Todd Horton
President, NUFA

THE STATUS OF CASBU COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

THE EMPLOYER REQUESTS JOINT-CONCILIATION

On Friday, November 19th the employer contacted the chair of the CASBU negotiating team, 1) stating that from the administration's perspective negotiations are at an impasse, 2) holding to the administration's zero-zero deal on compensation, and 3) requesting that the two teams file jointly for conciliation with the Ontario Ministry of Labour.

ZERO-ZERO COMPENSATION

Part-time instructors at NU are the lowest-paid part-time faculty in Ontario. They make up close to half of NU's total faculty—and they contribute significantly to the A+ standard of teaching Nipissing is known for—yet the employer has refused to bargain beyond a zero-zero % compensation package for NU instructors. The employer's position not only devalues the professionalism of our instructors but also leaves NU egregiously behind on part-time wages in Ontario. The outcome will limit retention and recruitment potential for NU departments and faculties, ultimately causing NU programs, full-time faculty and students to pay for the downturn in quality that will surely follow such short-sighted planning.

FISCAL CONTEXT AND THE ONTARIO BUDGET

The employer's refusal to budge from its zero-zero offer is based on a claim that it's a "bad time for bargaining in Ontario." However, in the Ontario government's budget legislation *there is no law mandating a wage freeze for employees who bargain collectively*. In fact, Bill 16 states unambiguously in clause 4. (2) that employees who bargain collectively are exempt from wage restraint. The rules of collective bargaining remain unchanged in Ontario today, and the trend continues towards fair and equitable wage-increases across the province. An analysis of the provincial budget by the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations (OCUFA) projects that university operating revenues will increase substantially (up to 6.8 %) in the coming year.

NU HAS THE FINANCIAL RESOURCES FOR FAIR AND EQUITABLE COMPENSATION

Nipissing University is in a financial position to provide its faculty with fair and equitable compensation. The administration is choosing not to. There is no wage-freeze in place for Nipissing—or for any Ontario university—and the trend in the province is towards compensation increases. In this fiscal context, CASBU remains committed to good-faith bargaining for a fair and equitable outcome.

NU'S OPERATING BUDGET: \$1.2 MILLION-PLUS SURPLUS

NU has a \$1.22 million surplus + a \$940 thousand contingency-fund in the 2010-2011 operating budget.

We'd like to hear what you think.

Solidarity is our strength!



SPOTLIGHT ON SETTLEMENTS AT UWO

Faculty at UWO were ready to hit the picket lines at the beginning of November, and were only saved from that fate by a marathon eleventh-hour bargaining session that resulted in a tentative deal.

The major issues at stake in bargaining at UWO were compensation and the Employer's attack on the university's promotion and tenure system. In the end, the faculty association was able to fight off the employer's proposals and to secure a compensation package that compounds to a 8.82 % increase over four years for full-time faculty (that's an average of 2.21 % per year), and a slightly higher increase of 8.96 % over four years for part-time faculty (for an average of 2.24 % per year).

In September, the parties worked with a government-appointed conciliator to try to reach a deal at the table. That same month the faculty association held a strike vote for its members, who voted 87 % per cent in favour of a strike action if a deal could not be reached at the table. Tensions ran high as the strike deadline loomed. The faculty association set up shop in an offsite location and had signs printed; members were scheduled to walk the picket line. To many, a strike seemed inevitable.

On the eve of the strike deadline both sides met for what would turn into an eighteen-hour bargaining session that ended – three hours after the deadline – in a tentative deal that members went on to ratify with 86 % of faculty voting in favour.

A few days later the employer reached an agreement with its staff union for a three year deal that includes scale increases of 1.5 % per year over three years, and subsequently they came to a tentative agreement with the graduate TA union (results of their deal are not yet public).

WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THE EXPERIENCE AT UWO?

Member support is key at the bargaining table

A strong backing by the membership gave the negotiating team the leverage it needed to reach a fair deal.

Universities are playing hardball in negotiations

Universities across the province are forcing negotiations to the 11th hour.

Fair compensation is attainable

Though this settlement is lower than Western faculty might have hoped, they did not accept in any way, shape, or form a settlement of 0 % over two years.

SPOTLIGHT ON NEGOTIATIONS AT CARLETON

Compensation for full-time faculty at Carleton University will be decided by a provincially-appointed arbitrator after efforts to reach a deal at the table failed.

This follows a dizzying round of negotiations at Carleton, where the major issues (like at UWO) included an aggressive attack by the employer on the university's tenure and promotion system and compensation. In October the faculty association held a strike vote, earning an overwhelming 88.5 % support for a strike action if a deal could not be reached at the table.

At the beginning of November the employer and the faculty association agreed to pull all non-monetary issues off the table, and to use a mediator to come to an agreement on compensation. The employer then agreed that they would go to arbitration if a deal could not be reached at the table in return for the faculty agreeing not to go on strike.

The Ontario Labour Board has appointed one of its top arbitrators, Martin Teplitsky, to hear the case and make an award. Teplitsky was in the news in October after making an arbitration award for faculty at the University of Toronto of 4.5 % over two years. In the award, Teplitsky stated that he would not act as a "minion of government" and accede to the provincial government's request for a wage freeze. No date has yet been set for the arbitration hearing.

Carleton recently reached deals with three bargaining units represented by CUPE. It signed three-year deals with TAs and Contract staff, which will see increases of 1.5 % in each of the first two years, and 2 % in the third for TAs, and increases of 1.5 % in the first two years and 2.4 % in the third for Contract staff. They also signed a four-year deal with clerical, library, administrative and technical staff which will see increases in compensation of 7 % over the deal (1.5 % increases in each of the first two years, and 2 % increases in each of the last two years. That deal includes a clause that no positions in the unit will be eliminated due to outsourcing.



DUNCAN "SATISFIED" WITH UWO AGREEMENT

The provincial government continues to soften its position on a 0 % wage freeze for two years in the broader public sector among workers who bargain collectively. Finance Minister Dwight Duncan recently told a group of students at Western that the government is satisfied with the deals that the university has made with three different bargaining units on campus, all of which include annual increases in compensation. According to the *Western News*, Duncan told the audience that "Western, and several other public sector employers, are helping to keep salary increases to a minimum, which, in turn, is good for the province's bottom line." Clearly, the government is not putting pressure on employers to comply with their earlier 0, 0 for two years request.

For the complete story, see: http://communications.uwo.ca/com/western_news/stories/salary_bumps_bode_well_for_province%E2%80%99s_bottom_line_20101125447143/