



ComMUNACtions

Newsletter of the McGill University Non-Academic Certified Association

Volume 6- issue 1 - 2018

President's Report

Dear members,

I have been asked to write a little introductory missive for our resurrected newsletter. I would like to talk about unions, my experiences within them, and how they have changed our lives.

I have been involved with unions since the mid-70s . These experiences have framed my perspective on life, and what, how and why unions are critical to positive social change in our society. There are many examples of unions being at the forefront in obtaining important improvements for all members in society. I will cite two of the best known: unemployment insurance and maternity leaves. I first saw anti-discrimination clauses in collective agreements in the mid-seventies. Unions were one of the first groups to fight for the protections against discrimination based on political or religious beliefs, race, sexual orientation, to name but a few. This does not mean the struggle is over. Discrimination still exists, and we have a duty to fight against it. As for us, being in a union gives us a chance to work together to improve our working conditions and to stand up for ourselves. Although our strike in 2011 was long and difficult, many of us took from it a sense of pride in that we stood up and said we deserved better. We can argue over to what extent we succeeded in getting better working conditions, but I think we cannot deny it brought us together, since most of us feel we stood up for ourselves, and that this is always the right thing to do.

Despite some of the important gains that the union movement has been able to obtain for all, we still sometimes hear, especially when we are on a picket line, things like. "Get back to work! You are lucky to have a job! You are overpaid! They should fire the lot of you!!" Well, these same people have benefited from EI and Maternity/Paternity leaves. We should just respond by saying, "You're Welcome!!"

I invite the members to share their stories about unions. I remember when I was in my late teens my dad worked at Canadair and was on strike twice, once for nine weeks. As you may guess, things got a little difficult in our household; however, we, along with my father, fully supported the decision to strike and knew it was the right thing to do for his fellow members and for his family's future. I am very much looking forward to hearing your stories.

Finally, I am very pleased that the newsletter is up and running again. Thanks to Oscar Morales, who did a wonderful job with the design and lay-out, and to our Communications Committee - cannot wait for the second edition.

In Solidarity,
Thomas Chalmers

What's Inside?

Steward Profile
Page - 2

Stand Up!
Page - 3

On Campus
Page - 4

Pension Plan
Continuance
Page - 6

Steward Profile



MARYLIN LINHARES

WORKPLACE AND POSITION:

Glen Site, Administrative and Student Affairs Coordinator

STEWARD AT MUNACA SINCE:

2016

CONTACT INFO:

marylin.linhares@mcgill.ca
514-934-1934, ext: 34699



What do you like about being a Steward?

To give back to the Union, Munaca helped me with a problem I had with my position (reclassification) and I wanted to pay them back and the only way I found was to become a steward and participate in any way I could. To be able to give some feedback at the Stewards meetings. To be a volunteer at the Union BBQ's when I can.

I love sports and I have two daughters (11 and 12 years old) that love sports too, so they keep my husband and I very busy with Soccer, Flag Football and all the various tournaments that they sign up for with their school. I sign up for at least one obstacle race a year (i.e. Spartann Race, Deadend Race, etc) therefore, I try to train hard to be ready for them!

The biggest challenge at the Glen Site is not knowing where McGill employees are located at as we are scattered all over and to know who in our area is McGill or MUHC.

STAND UP!

BY COLBY BRIGGS
HEALTH & SAFETY REP FOR DIRECTLY CHARTERED
LOCALS
MUNACA - PSAC:AFPC

The wonderful world of occupational health and safety, aka worker's compensation, aka CNESST, is shrouded in a cloud of bureaucratic confusion, occasionally taxing paperwork, and contradictory messages. Unfortunately a lot of what we hear about our rights in the workplace vis-a-vis health and safety seems to be through the grapevine, and it is not positive. In reality, though, your union is consistently successful in helping apply Quebec's occupational health and safety laws here at McGill.

It's a fact: you have the right to know about all the risks and dangers of the work you are going to do. Was there an asbestos leak or chemical spill? You are entitled to see that report! After all, it is your health.

What's more, your employer is responsible for protecting your health in all aspects of your job - even when you have certain personal conditions that might make you more vulnerable to risks. This extends to mental health and ergonomic conditions. If you are worried your job might harm your health, please stand up and say no! Your health and safety committee is only an email away, and can provide more information or help with a request for accommodation. Remember, protecting your health is not just good for you, it makes good business sense. Prevention is always a lot cheaper than trying to fix the problem after an accident.

"Believe it or not - it is probably a workplace accident. In Quebec, the law defines insured accidents as things that happen at work or because of work."

With this said, injuries are also a common grounds for misunderstanding. To make matters worse, many of our members have reported being told incorrect or misleading information by HR.

Instead of using CNESST's services (which force the employer to clean up their act and come at their expense), some people are directed to STD, LTD, and our health & dental plan - something that we all pay into. In HR's defense, Quebec's definition of a workplace accident or occupational illness is pretty broad but not always clear. Trouble sleeping and feeling emotionally drained at the end of the day because of nasty comments and terse emails? This is probably a workplace illness. Trip and bruise your knee at IGA while picking up milk for a staff meeting? Believe it or not - probably a workplace accident. In Quebec, the law defines insured accidents as things that happen at work or because of work.

If your injury falls within this definition, and based on how you file your paperwork, chances are the CNESST can hook you up with a physio, psychologist, or other rehabilitation specialist (at no cost to you) before you know it. Involving MUNACA as soon as you hurt yourself (even if you think it is minor or not covered by the law) means that we can help you make sure your paperwork meets the CNESST's standards.

So stand up! Take advantage of the rights afforded to you - please get in touch for any H&S concern so we can help you make things safer, more efficient, and more harmonious here at McGill.



Stewards
are all over
McGill
campus,
find your
nearest!



Click here: <http://www.munaca.com/index.php/contact-us/stewards/>



FAMILY DAYS

"Test Run"

In response to a poll conducted by MUNACA during the first week of March, a vast majority of those responding spoke in favour of joining the 'pilot project' on "Family Days" proposed by McGill. 92.35% of women and 85.88% of men responded "yes". Of the 477 members answering, 26 also chose to make comments. Many of those, positive or negative, noted a preference for adding overall days to the total available to look after family members.

Following receipt of the poll results, MUNACA's president, Thomas Chalmers, requested a copy of the formal letter of agreement that would permit activation of the new policy. The letter was signed on March 15th, 2018. The terms of reference of the pilot consist of allowing employees to use 3 days normally allotted for "personal incidental illness days" to look after a sick family member. To use any of these days please first read the details of the policy here.



Macdonald Campus

Union Council Meeting

May 18th. 1pm, Faculty Lounge

5 à 7 Reception

May 18th. 5pm, TBA

Downtown Campus

Annual General Meeting

June 6th, 12pm, Maass 110

Spring BBQ

June 13th, 12pm, Three Bares



MEMBER IN NEED

We are reaching out to ask for your generosity to help a fellow member in need.

Leisa, who works in the Office for Sponsored Research, lost everything in a house fire last month and unfortunately did not have any insurance. As you can imagine it is a completely overwhelming time for her.

She has worked at McGill for over 11 years. Her colleagues describe her as a truly lovely and kind person, who continues to come to work with a smile on her face despite everything!

We hope we can pull together and collectively raise some money to help her get through this terrible time and move forward. Every little bit help and any contribution would be greatly appreciated.

[Click here for a link to the Gofundme](#)



HOW TO CALCULATE YOUR SALARY INCREASE



You may have noticed that the Collective Agreement says the following for this year's increase: "By the same percentage as the Quebec Government Salary Policy (April 2018) on June 1st, 2018"

This is because at the time that we were negotiating the Collective Agreement, we chose to match it to whatever the public sector salary increase was. For 2018, it was 2%.

The 2.0% economic increase was applied on the 2017 salary scale to produce the new 2018 salary scale. Therefore, all step rates in the 2018 salary scale in the collective agreement incorporate the economic increase.

Most MUNACA members can verify their salary increase by comparing the step rate they had in the 2017 salary scale with the step rate (one step higher) in the June 2018 salary scale, up to the maximum of the scale.

If your PED received a Pay Equity adjustment, find your PED on the left hand column, and then look to the appropriate step. If your PED did not receive a Pay Equity adjustment, find your level (grey rows) on the left hand column, and then look to the appropriate step.

Special rules apply for some members (for example, those who are still secured on old scales) or for those who still need to forego their first progression increase in order to compensate for the Summer Fridays (see article 23.11).

You can find the 2017 and 2018 salary scales on the MUNACA website

Voting for the pension plan - "For or against continuance?"

If you have looked at the ballot on voting procedures for the pension plan, you'll have seen that the University once again reproduced its statement having to do with voting "for or against continuance." This statement is used, year after year, as a means to convince Plan members to continue support for what is, essentially, an undemocratic system.

There is already an imbalance of representatives appointed by the Administration compared with elected representatives on the pension committee (5 versus 4). What we are threatened with, should we fail to vote in favour of the status quo, is that this imbalance will become even greater, because the number of elected reps (it is written) will fall to 2. The problem with this assertion is that Quebec's Supplemental Pension Plans Act stipulates there should be 4.

According to the terms of so-called "continuance," those with the most money in the plan, which is to say, retired professors, senior members of the administrative and members of the Faculty of Management, among others, receive more votes than everyone else. Some plan members support this idea, because they believe those who are older and with more money invested will inherently be more prudent and experienced. They also point out that the plan is, by and large, well run, and that things should therefore stay as-is. Against this notion two points are raised: younger people have more at stake, in terms of their future, in how the plan is run; democratic values should be reflected, to the extent possible, in our institutions, and basing votes on amount of money cannot be justified.

Since most plan members continue to vote in favour of "continuance" your voting "against" may make no practical difference to the result. If, however, you believe in a more transparent discussion of decisions that go into the administration of your pension plan, including how and why it has the representatives it does, we encourage you to cast your vote "against."



The Communications Committee

is looking for new members with communications experience or who are interested in improving communications between the union and its members.

Interested? email: communications@munaca.com