



## UNION OF GRADUATE STUDENT WORKERS

PSAC Local 60550

Mail: Box 612 Stn A, Fredericton NB E3B 5A6

Office: 19F Alumni Memorial Bldg, 13 Bailey Dr, UNB Fredericton

T 506. 451.6882 www.ugsw-psac60550.ca ugswnb@gmail.com



Public Service Alliance of Canada  
Alliance de la Fonction publique du Canada

Joe Blades: **President's Report**, September 2011

Less than a month after our Annual General Meeting in December 2010, when I was first elected to the UGSW's Executive as your 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President, I was bumped up to become President. It has been a period of challenging and demanding work for me ever since then. New to the Executive I had expected to learn the ropes this year and then stand for president.

We are a new union, still in the first year of our first Collective Agreement. Early this year we received an office at UNB Fredericton, 19F Alumni Memorial Bldg, that is coming together as a workplace. Our union local needs to create stability and succession within itself. We need to undertake Union work in manageable amounts and that is best done with many hands. We need a core of active members for the Executive and other committees, especially for the stewards' network across both campuses.

Implementation of the Collective Agreement wasn't well-planned by the Employer, just imposed, and that created initial confusion and resentment in department staff; even blaming of the Union for changing the way things were done regarding Graduate Teaching Assistantships and Research Assistantships. The Executive has met repeatedly with the Employer to help them meet payroll obligations, as well as the adoption of online form-fillable B1 and B2 documents/contracts that meet the requirements of the Collective Agreement. We have an active Union-Management Committee (UMC) that I co-chair with Peter McDougall, UNB Associate Vice President Human Resources and Organizational Development. Also on the Union-Management Committee for the Union have been Meghann Bruce, Teresa Debly, and Greg Ericson.

In recent months, we have been supportive of the PSAC-led organizing drive for the Professional and Technical Staff Union on the two main UNB campuses. The UGSW hosted an off-campus meeting in Saint John and attempted to host meetings on both campuses but the room bookings and food orders were cancelled by the Employer who called them "unlawful" events (we believe in violation of the Collective Agreement as we believe our union business to include supporting other workers on campus who are seeking to unionize).

On the matter of Union education, the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC), Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), NB Federation of Labour, Fredericton District Labour Council, Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) and other union organizations all offer education/workshop opportunities for members, especially for stewards and local officers. Some are free, some charge fees ... but we are at UNB for our education so why not expand the scope of your education to help make UNB a better university workplace.

We have the active support of PSAC regional and national staff in NB and the Atlantic region, especially in Anna Gogen who replaced Monique Laplante as our regional officer. The region is vast so the staff are stretched thin in their work and travel coverage.

Looking forward, UGSW hopes to work more closely with AUNBT; with FAUST and the new St Thomas University campus labour council; with the Fredericton District Labour Council; and with other Directly-Chartered Locals, especially in the education sector, in preparation for the triennial PSAC National Convention in June 2012. We must also start our in-house preparations to negotiate a second Collective Agreement to take effect 1 May 2013—not so very far away.