



## Unions Rally For Anti-Scab Legislation

(PG 18-19)



Equity Summit  
(PG 12-13)



Corrections Rally  
(PG 6)

# THE NO-ON STAND

A PUBLICATION OF THE N.S. GOVERNMENT & GENERAL EMPLOYEES UNION

Spring 2024

Dear members,

On April 19, 2024 the NSGEU celebrated its 66th birthday. Originally founded in 1958 as the Nova Scotia Civil Service Association it has been working to protect public services and the people who deliver them ever since. In 1981 the NSCSA became a union and the NSGEU was formally established.

Today, the NSGEU is the province's largest union and is the recognized bargaining agent for over 35,000 public and private sector employees. Our members work in the civil service, centres of education, universities, hospitals, liquor stores, correctional facilities, municipalities, and other organizations located around the province.

The strength and success of the NSGEU is because of you – our members. Without your commitment to stand up for what is right and fair, to be willing to put it all on the line for the overall good of others, and the dedication to stand united with other locals and members, that is our superpower. And no employer or government will

ever be able to take that from us.

We have endured, perhaps the most anti-union government, in our history led by Premier Stephen McNeil. And now we see the results of his shortsighted and ill-conceived attacks on unions. The health care system went from bad to worse, there are staff shortages throughout the civil service, and programs

and services that people depend on are being put at risk or are not able to meet the demands.

Unions not only predicted these outcomes but fought hard every step of the way to warn Nova Scotians and employers of the impacts these cuts would have on people, programs,

and services.

Members will be able to rely on the NSGEU to stand up for better wages, better working conditions, improved benefits, and protections that help keep employees safe at work. The NSGEU has much to be proud of for its work the last 66 years and together we will continue to stand up for workers for decades to come.

In solidarity,

Sandra Mullen  
President, NSGEU



NSGEU members gathered for cake with President Sandra Mullen for NSGEU's 66th birthday.



### THE STAND

is a publication of the Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union 255 John Savage Ave. Dartmouth, NS, B3B 0J3

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The NSGEU is affiliated with the Canadian Labour Congress, the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour, and the National Union of Public and General Employees.  
[unionsyeah.ca](http://unionsyeah.ca)



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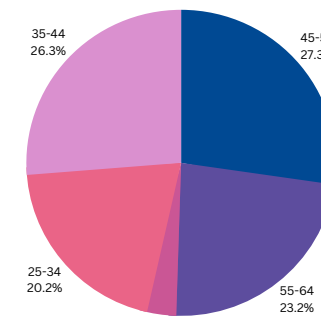


## YOUR UNION AT A GLANCE

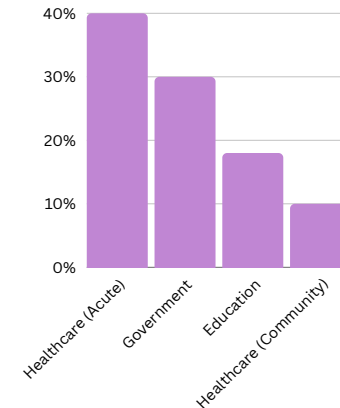
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### SECTORAL REPRESENTATION



### CONNECT WITH US!

We want to hear from our members. If you have thoughts on this issue of The Stand, or ongoing union issues, send us your feedback! You can email us at [inquiry@nsgeu.ca](mailto:inquiry@nsgeu.ca) or connect with us:

- [facebook.com/NSGEU](https://facebook.com/NSGEU)
- [@NSGEU](https://twitter.com/NSGEU)

### NSGEU STAFF



NSGEU HAS 66 PEOPLE ON STAFF THAT WORK TO SERVICE THE UNION MEMBERSHIP

### MEMBERS

36,426

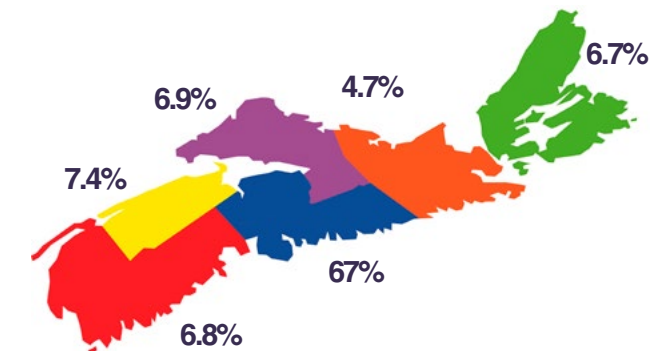
### SIGNED MEMBERS

80.2%

### FUN FACT

The total number of NSGEU members are equal to more than the populations of Richmond, Inverness and Guysborough Counties combined. Our memberships is large enough to span three counties; that's strength in numbers!

### MEMBERS BY REGION



Hugh Gillis, 1st Vice-President, NSGEU.

Hugh is assisting President Mullen and working directly with local executives to strengthen the NSGEU from one end of the province to the other.

He would like to thank the membership for all their cooperation this Spring and he is looking forward to continuing to work together in 2024.

If you have any questions, you can contact Hugh at:

[hgillis@nsgeu.ca](mailto:hgillis@nsgeu.ca)



# Health Care Workers Ready To Bargain

All too often, when people think about health care, doctors and nurses spring to mind. But there are a whole host of other important workers who play equally integral roles in providing your care: there are administrative professionals, support service staff, and another very diverse group that is simply categorized as “Health Care” in

Nova Scotia. Alongside CUPE and Unifor, we have just started bargaining for this group of members.

This Health Care bargaining unit contains an extremely diverse group of classifications and occupations: there are approximately 174 occupations in total. The diversity of this bargaining unit makes it somewhat difficult to explain to the public who exactly they are.

But the work they do can generally be organized under 12 key services:

- Diagnostic Imaging & Laboratory Services
- Respiratory Services
- Pharmacy Services
- Physical Therapy Services
- Mental Health & Addictions Services
- Cancer Therapy Services

- Prosthetic Services
- Anaesthesia Services
- Hearing & Speech Services
- Paramedic Services
- Orthopaedic Services
- Community Health Services

## Health-care job vacancies rise as contract talks loom, union says

Health authority notes hundreds of new jobs created in recent years to meet patient needs



Michael Gorman · CBC News · Posted: Jan 31, 2024 5:06 PM AST | Last Updated: January 31



Diagnostic imaging is one of the work categories included in the bargaining unit that represents highly skilled health-care workers. (Laura Meader/CBC)

Many of these positions are highly skilled/professionalized and require a great deal of education and certification. Therefore, there is a great deal of disparity between wages within this bargaining unit. Our recent wage analysis shows that of 18 occupations that make up more than 50 per cent of the bargaining unit, most are paid less than their counterparts elsewhere in

Atlantic Canada.

Many members are understandably frustrated by these low wages in the face of unprecedented inflation (the NSGEU bargaining survey showed 80 per cent are either completely dissatisfied or somewhat dissatisfied with their rate of pay). And there is a great deal of concern around workload and short staffing (80 per cent of NSGEU respondents’ report working in an area affected by unfilled vacancies).

Recent data obtained from NSH via FOIPOP shows the

number of vacancies in the Health Care bargaining unit has actually increased from 359.7 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) positions in April 2019 to 1,070.4 FTE in October 2023. This has resulted in 72 per cent feeling their current workload is excessive compared with previous years. Almost ¼ (23 per cent) say they have experienced violence in the workplace.

You may recall that as a result of legislation passed by the past Liberal provincial government, the NSGEU now bargains as part of a Council of Unions. Along with Unifor and CUPE for the Health Care Council, we collectively represent almost 9,100 health care workers working in a wide variety of roles at Nova Scotia Health (NSH) throughout the province and the IWK. We are also now compelled by legislation to work with the employer to establish an Essential Services staffing agreement prior to any legal strike action taking place.

The Health Care Council of Unions representatives met with employer representatives on Monday, March 4th to exchange proposals, and have confirmed eight additional dates to continue bargaining, with the next date scheduled for Thursday, April 18th and the final date scheduled for Wednesday, June 19th.

Union representatives have also been working diligently

behind the scenes, attempting to reach an agreement with the employer on essential services staffing levels.

So far, ten days of negotiations have been held to try and conclude an agreement on essential services, and while significant progress has been made, there are still some areas that have yet to be settled. We are currently working to schedule further essential service

negotiation dates.

It is time that government acknowledges the value of the work being done by our Health Care members and ensures that they are compensated appropriately, so we can both attract and retain these highly skilled and highly sought after professionals that we need to deliver quality public health care in Nova Scotia. Health care

in Nova Scotia simply cannot function without them. Government must act now. ■

## Staff shortages still a limiting factor in improving N.S. health care

Recent plans to increase, improve cancer screening and therapies will require more people



Michael Gorman · CBC News · Posted: Jan 29, 2024 6:00 AM AST | Last Updated: January 29



Health Minister Michelle Thompson says her government’s efforts to attract and retain health-care workers continues, but it’s an issue facing systems across the country. (Robert Short/CBC)

## Solidarity Among Corrections Officers Forces Government to Act

**N**SGEU Corrections Officers have been in a year long battle with their employer with the main issues being, working conditions, recruitment and retention of employees, and the safety of staff and inmates in the facility.

After numerous meetings and media stories about the state of correctional facilities in Nova Scotia the issue was elevated by a Supreme Court of Nova Scotia ruling. The ruling was about

how long inmates were being kept in their cells without any recreation time.

On January 12, 2024 Justice Peter Rosinski found that the Department of Justice ‘unlawfully and materially deprived (inmate Durrell Diggs) of his residual liberty for a significant number of days.’ It was found that Mr. Diggs was left in his cell for 22 hours a day for as many as 36 days.



Further in Justice Rosinski’s decision he stated that “While lockdowns have continually persisted for many months, the underlying systemic staffing problem is one that ultimately only government can effectively address.”

This was the kind of validation and reinforcement corrections officers needed to better legitimize their concerns. First Vice President Hugh Gillis, himself a corrections officer, presented a clear case for change.

“The Minister has long been aware of this problem and now we have a Supreme Court decision backing the corrections officers up and the government has remained silent. Corrections officers are there to keep inmates and our communities safe, and they are asking for help, where is the Justice Minister?”

An information picket was held on March 6, 2024 at Province House while the legislature was in session. Corrections officers and other NSGEU members came out in strong solidarity and held a loud, effective picket.

The demonstration got the attention of the Premier. Upon entering the legislature, the Premier spoke with First VP Gillis and said he wanted to find a solution to this and he was going to send the Justice Minister over to speak with him. The Minister spoke with Hugh and President Sandra Mullen and scheduled a meeting.

At the meeting the then Justice Minister Brad Johns and his associate deputy minister Chris Collett acknowledged the important work corrections officers do and the challenges they currently face. There was clear agreement that the union and department must

work together to make more immediate changes to the working conditions to keep our members safe.

In addition, the union and department agreed to continue discussions through the development of a solutions-based working group that will provide a place to identify issue and work together to come up with workable solutions.

The recent resignation of Brad Johns and appointment of Barbara Adams as the new Justice Minister should not impact the progress made so far. The union will reach out to Minister Adams and schedule a meeting to connect on the work happening in corrections. ■

## Labour Board Says Unions Should Retain Bargaining Rights Under New Provincial Housing Authority

**T**he province recently consolidated the regional housing authorities into a single provincial employer. Part of the reorganization was an application by the province to the Nova Scotia Labour Board to merge all unionized staff into a single bargaining unit. If the application was successful, it would mean a series of run off votes between the representative unions to determine who would become the single bargaining agent for all unionized staff.

All impacted unions came together and argued collectively to the Labour Board that any such run off votes was unnecessary. At this point there had been no evidence that the current union representation could not work.

On March 6, the Labour Board denied the employer’s application and rules that all existing bargaining units and rights will be maintained.

This was a good result for NSGEU members.

The Board decision went on to direct employers and impacted unions to meet and negotiate various outstanding issues, including inter-regional mobility, pay equity, standardized job descriptions, titles, and other substantive provisions that are likely to impact employees across regional boundaries. Both the employer and unions have up to 12-months to resolve all remaining issues. If an agreement is not reached in 12-months than either side can apply to the Board for a new order.

Meetings should be scheduled to start within the next month.

So, what does this decision mean for our members working in the Provincial Housing Authority?

Most importantly, this means that every unionized worker will bet to stay with their respective union. In addition, all existing bargaining rights remain unchanged for the next year, as noted if those remaining issues are not resolved in the next year than the matter can be brought back to the Board for a further order. ■



# Political Update: Budget, Wine Bottling, and Speaker and Justice Minister Resign

The spring legislative session is traditionally all about the provinces budget. The government looks to dominate the media coverage and tell a positive story about what the government is doing to meet its commitments and priorities.

This budget was no exception, its introduction in the legislature was followed up by a series of announcements and funding commitments.

The key parts of the budget were: the indexation of personal income tax brackets and non-refundable tax credits, including the spousal amount and the dependent amount, the infirm dependent amount and the age amount.

This was all positioned as cost-of-living measures and tax cuts to put more money in people's pockets.

However, the good news train was derailed by Zach Churchill and the Liberals as they questioned the government on a commercial wine support program that would subsidize the use of foreign grape juice which would undermine the Nova Scotia wine industry. It was later learned that only two commercial bottlers, both friends of the Premier, would benefit from this \$12-million program.

The wine making industry also called out the Premier

and this story became the main issue for government. The Premier was once again caught making policy that helps his friends, while disadvantaging the wine making industry. As the intensity of the problem grew the government showed signs of backing down.

Which it did a few weeks later, when the Premier announced he would pause the program while he worked with wine makers to ensure they were not disadvantaged by the changes. This was a big win for the Churchill Liberals as it put them in the news as standing up for hard working Nova Scotians and positioned the Premier as only in it for

himself and his friends.

The budget was passed, and the legislature paused until the fall. However, that was not the end of the governments self inflicted problems.

April 18 Justice Minister Brad Johns responded to a question on the inquiry into the 2020 Nova Scotia mass shooting and its recommendations. Johns indicated he did not agree with everything in the report, and when pushed for an example he said he did not believe domestic violence was an epidemic in the province.

The following 24 hours saw Johns receive criticism

from all sides. Premier Houston issued a statement that same day saying that 'I want to be very clear about this government's position on domestic violence. This is an issue we take very seriously. As the Mass Casualty Commission included in their report, domestic violence is an epidemic in Nova Scotia and Canada.'

The following day the Premier announced he had accepted the resignation of Brad Johns as Justice Minister and quickly appointed Barbara Adams as the new Minister.

Also, worthy of note is that following the end of the spring legislative sitting the House Speaker, Karla MacFarlane announced she had resigned the speakers chair as well as stepping down as MLA. This is another key government member who will not be running in the next election.

The Premier quickly called the by-election which will be held May 21. The Pictou West seat should remain in control of the governing Progressive Conservatives.

As more things change the question for the Premier has become will he stick to his commitment on fixed election dates or will he call an early election?

Only time will tell but these kinds of unforced errors puts the government in a tough spot on when to hold the next election. ■

## N.S. justice minister resigns after controversial comments on domestic violence

Resignation comes after Brad Johns personally contacted women's shelters to apologize

Anjuli Patil · CBC News · Posted: Apr 19, 2024 7:38 PM ADT | Last Updated: April 19



## N.S. wineries say new provincial program could be 'catastrophic' for local grape growers

Government says change is needed to comply with international trade rules

Josh Hoffman · CBC News · Posted: Mar 05, 2024 6:00 AM AST | Last Updated: March 5



# NSGEU Leadership Engagement Day

On January 22, 2024 NSGEU hosted its Leadership Engagement Day. It was a day where members from all over the province came together to connect, learn, and be inspired together.

Those in attendance heard from a variety of speakers including NSGEU President Sandra Mullen and NUPGE President Bert Blundon.

Blundon was able to share the state of bargaining across the country and what lessons can be learned as the NSGEU heads into significant bargaining in health care and the civil service.

NSGEU Executive Director Shawn Fuller provided an update on the unions communications efforts to better meet the membership where they are, and provide the information they need, in a way they can access it. Email continues to be the preferred method of communication; however, the union continues to explore faster and more efficient ways to make sure our members are up to date on the issues that matter to them.

The group also heard from Nova Scotia Federation of Labour President Danny Cavanagh and Mat Whyntott, the regional representative for the Canadian Labour

Congress. These are two key organizations that help solidify the labour movement in Nova Scotia.



There was a panel discussion with activists who discussed the lessons learned from the 2022 strike by school support worker members at the Annapolis Valley Centre for Education and the South Shore Regional Centre for Education. A targeted advertising campaign by the union aimed at local government MLAs created the



pressure needed to get a positive result for the members. The members were seen on multiple picket lines and they won the hearts and minds of their community which created further pressure on government to end the strike.

The NSGEU also put on presentations ranging from Occupational Health and Safety and Pensions. Overall, it was a successful

day which finished with First Vice President Hugh Gillis presenting the unions overall strategic plan. The strategic plan is the NSGEU's action document to guide the NSGEU on implementing the decisions of our Triennial Convention and Board of directors. Click [here](#) to watch a video of our Leadership Engagement Day. ■

# Equity Survey

## Highlights of the telephone poll

Among members who identified as a visible or racialized individual, one in four or 27% self-identified as black. South Asian and Middle Eastern/West Asian were the next largest groups, each 13% and 2% identified as Indigenous.

Eleven percent of members self-identified as having disabilities or accessibility needs. Of that group 61% have a mobility or physical impairment. Other identified issues were spinal cord injuries (6%), mental health/behavioural/cognitive (16%), hard of hearing (6%) and visually impaired (6%).

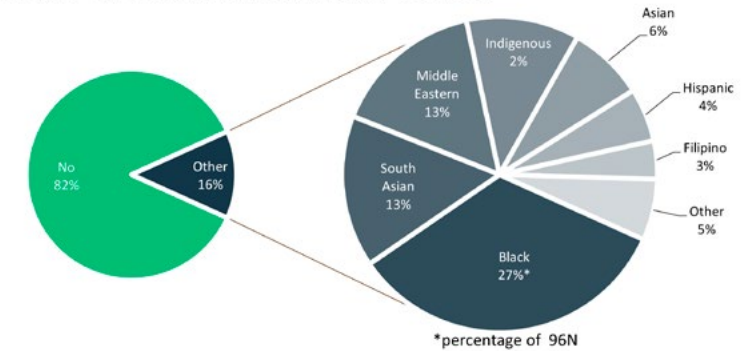
## Highlights of the Member Survey

The group move members identified with was White and European descent (76%) with Black or African American representing 7% of the membership.

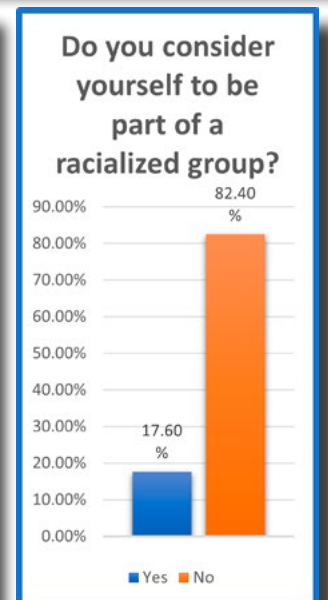
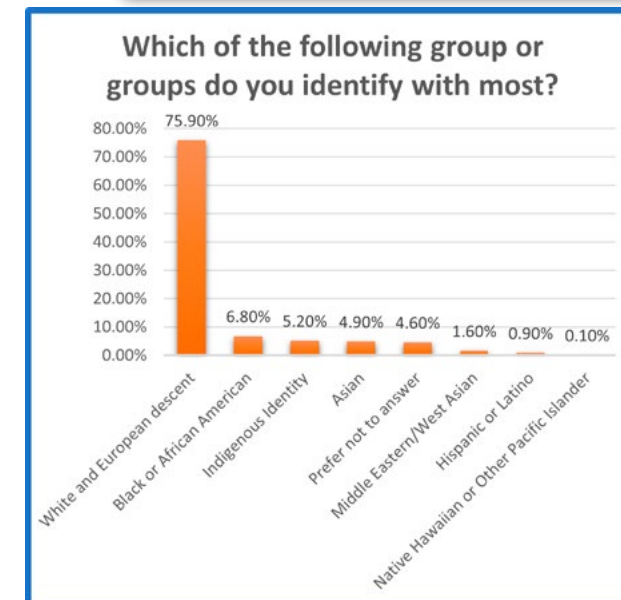
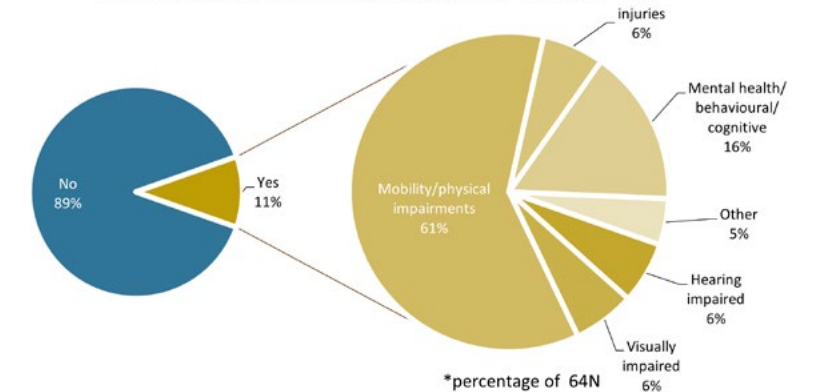
Seventy-six percent of members reported they haven't experienced any racial incidents at work in the last five years, there were 24% or members who did experience racial harassment, microaggression, bullying, physical violence, or intimidation at work or work related events. Of that there was 7% of members who had racist remarks directed at them or in their presence.

Click [here](#) to watch a video of our Equity Summit. ■

### VISIBLE OR RACIALIZED MINORITY GROUP



### DISABLED OR WITH ACCESSIBILITY NEEDS



# What's the Big IDEA? NSGEU Holds First Equity Summit

**O**n February 8<sup>th</sup>, the NSGEU hosted its first equity summit. The summit was part of the work being done by Elizabeth Kanyikwa to learn more about the make up and diversity of the union's membership and staff.

As directed by resolution at the last union convention the union was to conduct a telephone and online survey to gain data about the diversity of the union and how the union can best serve our members.

The Big IDEA stands for Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility.

The summit included speakers Juanita Peters, Chris Cochrane, Serene Porter, Jason MacLean and a presentation of the diversity survey results by NSGEU Executive Director Shawn Fuller.

The full day summit brought the work being done by Elizabeth to life and demonstrated how much work is still left to do. The issues of inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility are complex and impact all our members differently. The survey included many firsthand accounts, from members, about how they have been treated at work, barriers to promotion, and even examples of how the union can improve to better address situations.

What's the Big IDEA? Report can be found on the NSGEU website. ■



## Steward Profile: Dawn Daborn

Local 1246 NSH - Administrative Professionals, NSH

### How long have you been a steward?

10 years

### What made you want to become a steward?

I wanted to be able to support members with the correct answers to their questions and concerns as sometimes the answers that are provided from the employer do not benefit the member's interests.

### What issues do you typically deal with in your workplace as a Steward?

Respectful workplace issues, payroll, holiday and vacation questions.

### Have you faced any discrimination in the workplace by stepping forward to become a Steward?

Not in my time here

### What kind of skills has being a Steward given you?

Yes absolutely! The more knowledge and involvement you have the better quality work life you have.



## NSGEU's Cancer Care Fund

The NSGEU administers a special fund for members or their immediate family members who have been diagnosed with cancer and are in need of financial assistance.

The hope is that this will offer a little extra support during a difficult time, providing up to \$300 in gas and/or grocery gift cards to applicants.

This fund was created by the NSGEU Women's Issues Committee in 2011, and since that time, more than \$83,600 has been distributed. In 2023 we gave a total of \$6,900 in gift cards, and so far for 2024, we have given a total of \$3,900 in gift cards.

The fund is available for members and their immediate family (immediate family is defined as a spouse, common-law partner, same-sex partner, children, or parent. The latter bonds may be by blood or by legal adoption). When you or your family member is accessing this fund you must know what NSGEU Local you belong to. If you aren't sure of your Local number, you can contact us at [inquiry@nsgeu.ca](mailto:inquiry@nsgeu.ca) or by calling 902-424-4063 (toll-free 1-877-556-7438).

Click here to apply: <https://fs2.formsite.com/nsgeu/form220/index.html>

## Administrative Professionals Week: Staff Profile

Hello, my name is Lisa Bouchard and I am currently the Executive Assistant to NSGEU President Sandra Mullen.

I started my career with the union in July 1989 and was assigned as secretary to the Administrator Negotiator now referred to as the Executive Director.

I recall my early days freshly graduated from the University College of Cape Breton and moving from Cape Breton to what was referred to as "the big city". I was so excited and a little scared. It was the days of IBM typewriters, handwritten notes, and dictation.

After being told about locals, bargaining unit negotiating councils, collective agreements, tech change and provincial committees, I thought I would never figure it out but somehow here I am 35 years later having managed to navigate the structure of NSGEU.

When I commenced employment with the union, it was comprised of 10,200 members and there were 10 collective agreements

- nine of which were civil service collective agreements by bargaining unit which have since been melded into a master collective agreement. The 10th collective agreement was the Public Archives of Nova Scotia. The union has definitely grown by leaps and bounds since this time with NSGEU now having over 37,000 members.

With administrative professional week being recognized, I would like to wish all administrative professionals within the union as well as my administrative professional co-workers a

happy administrative professional week. Thankfully, gone are the days where you were "just a secretary" and the stereotypes that all we did was make coffee and file our nails are gone.

Ask yourself where would we be without the great work of administrative professionals in today's world. Administrative professionals have to keep up on the latest technology and keep the office running smoothly.

I am happy to say that I have come to the end of my career with NSGEU and will be retiring the end of June, 2024 having worked with five NSGEU presidents, many executive committees and several boards of directors. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to work for an organization with such strong commitments to fairness and equity for employees and who are there to take on employers and protect workers' rights. ■





## Administrative Professionals Week: Member Profiles

### What is your name, where do you work and what do you do?

My name is Pam Grace and I work at the IWK Health Centre.

### How long have you been in the job and what drew you to this work in the first place?

This will be my 27th year working there. I wanted a good job working in the field I was trained for. Since then, I've worked in multiple areas - Admitting, ER, Inpatient unit, PNC, Peds Day Surgery and Health Records. I've been working in Emerald Workload since June 2009.

### Do you like your job? What do you like best about it?

I do like my job. I like the people I work with. The downside is I don't get to meet the patients face to face because we deal with patient data.

### Do you have a best day? Worst day?

Best days is when the data has been audited and corrections made and submitted on time.

### What do you think the public should know about the work you do that they might not already be aware of?

Along with my co-worker, we maintain a database where Workload Data is collected. It's a tool for measuring the volume of activity provided by caregivers that is collected in minutes. All professionals in Nursing and Allied Health disciplines employed by the IWK Health Centre collect this information.

We are required to submit this data to the Canadian Institute for Health Information and Nova Scotia Department of Health & Wellness.



### What is your name, where do you work and what do you do?

My name is Lisa MacLeod, I am an Administrative Assistant with Continuing Care.

### How long have you been in the job and what drew you to this work in the first place?

I have been with Continuing Care for six years, prior to this I worked casual with perioperative services and the cancer center. Continuing Care seemed like a better fit for the type of duties that interest me; the scope of work.

### Do you like your job? What do you like best about it?

I do like my job, I like the scope of work and helping people. My job is indirectly helping the elderly and vulnerable patients/clients.

### Do you have a best day? Worst day?

My best day is are when I am helping someone and it works out, and my worse days at work is when the work is overwhelming and we are short staffed.

### What do you think the public should know about the work you do that they might not already be aware of?

I feel the public thinks we sit and answer phones and do very little (not all the public). I wish they knew how important we are in their services and the process. To the data entry, the inputting them through the proper systems with the services they require etc. To ensuring things are correct in and filed properly, with documenting and saving etc. Too much to list in what I do daily honestly, however my coworkers treat me very well and remind me often that they feel I am very important to them.



### What is your name, where do you work and what do you do?

My name is Kim Sheppard-Campbell, I work as a Placement Clerk in Continuing Care

### How long have you been in the job and what drew you to this work in the first place?

I have only been in this job for 4 weeks, after 15 years in Mental Health/Addictions. I was drawn to this position because the need for Senior Care is at an all time high and I thought my efficient work habits would help in these processes.

### Do you like your job? What do you like best about it?

I like my job very much. I like the fact that in this position there is some flexibility with working from home and my co-workers are very nice. I ask a lot of questions and they are always willing to help

### Do you have a best day? Worst day?

I sure do, the best days here at work are when a large number of seniors are given a bed at a home of their preference.

### What do you think the public should know about the work you do that they might not already be aware of?

The public should be aware of how many seniors are waiting in hospital to be placed in a nursing home. When they are offered a bed for their loved one, unfortunately it is not always the preferred nursing home.



### What is your name, where do you work and what do you do?

My name is David Watts, and I work for Northwood Homecare as a Staffing Officer which is Local 38.

### How long have you been in the job and what drew you to this work in the first place?

I have been in my position for over eight years, what drew me to the position was the scheduling aspect. I worked as a flight crew scheduler prior to working for Northwood Homecare.

### Do you like your job? What do you like best about it?

I really like the people that I work with. We have a really good group in our office who work well together. We are good at bouncing ideas and plans off each other when one might be struggling.

### Do you have a best day? Worst day?

A good day for me is when I don't have to change schedules. Everyone shows up to work, and things run smoothly.

### What do you think the public should know about the work you do that they might not already be aware of?

When you call into the staffing department, or receive a call from us, we are the middle man. We understand your frustration with us, however quite often our hands are tied because authorizations are coming from others, and we are the one who have to implement them.





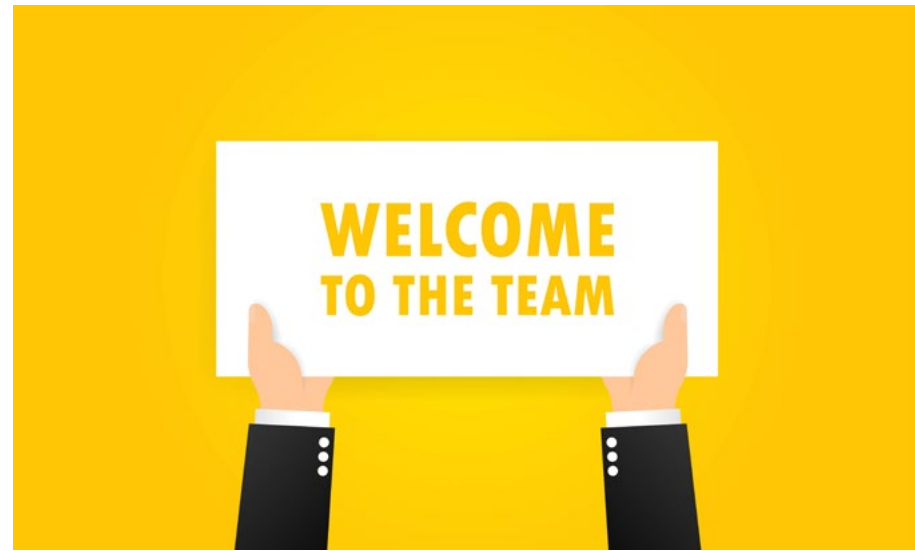
On March 19th, NSGEU President Sandra Mullen, 1<sup>st</sup> VP Hugh Gillis and the Executive along with Board members, joined other unions, and the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour at the Legislature, as provincial NDP Leader Claudia Chender introduced anti-scab legislation.

# Should I Sign a Union Card?

## Who doesn't want to be a member in good standing?

**Sending us your membership application form is a great thing to do!**

Signing and sending us your NSGEU membership application form is the way you become a member in good standing and the way you fully participate in your union. When we receive and process your application, we will send you back your union card.



- Have direct input into the bargaining priorities of your local by filling out a “bargaining input survey”;
- Receive information from your local about meetings and events as well as local bargaining updates when you are in negotiations;
- Attend NSGEU [Education courses](#);
- Attend [Pre-retirement Seminars](#) to learn about retirement planning;
- Get email invitations to union-wide social events such as our Annual Free Family Day Picnic or our Annual Fall Family Fun Day;
- Access to NSGEU’s Discount List, which offers savings from stores and services around the province including Marks Work Wearhouse and a variety of hotels and car rental agencies. (For the Discount List, see [nsgeu.ca](#) or contact us at 902-424-4063, 1-877-556-7438, or [inquiry@nsgeu.ca](mailto:inquiry@nsgeu.ca));
- Access to MHCSI Preferred Pharmacy Provider Program (aka Lawton’s Card). (For more information, see [nsgeu.ca](#) or contact us at 902-424-4063, 1-877-556-7438, or [inquiry@nsgeu.ca](mailto:inquiry@nsgeu.ca));

Applying for membership provides the union with your current up-to-date contact information, including a personal email, if possible. This is important because the information we get from your employer may not be correct and/or it may not be the best way to reach you. A signed and accepted union card application means you are part of the NSGEU community and can participate fully in all the democratic aspects of it.

When you send us your application form and receive your union card it means you are a member in good standing which means you can:

- Participate fully in your local by having the right to vote for your local executive and other representatives like Regional & Occupational Councillors, as well as your health & safety representation, just to name a few;
- Participate in all votes during negotiations including whether to accept or reject a tentative agreement reached by your bargaining committee;

[inquiry@nsgeu.ca](mailto:inquiry@nsgeu.ca));

- Apply for NSGEU scholarships, bursaries, or awards for yourself or your dependents;

If you have not yet received your membership package in the mail or if you would like to apply for membership, please contact us (902-424-4063, toll-free 877-556-7438, or [inquiry@nsgeu.ca](mailto:inquiry@nsgeu.ca)) and an application will be mailed to you with a postage-paid return envelope. Just fill it out, send it in, and you will be mailed your NSGEU membership card. We have a strict privacy policy;

your personal information will not be shared. If you have misplaced your NSGEU membership card, contact us and we’ll send you a replacement.

## What happens if I don't want to send in my membership application form and get a union card?

When you are hired into a position which is a unionized position and the union has received a signed payroll authorization card for deduction of dues, you are eligible to become a member of the union. Once your dues have been accepted, automatically, you enjoy all the bargaining gains achieved up until the time you were hired and any negotiated gains made in the future as long as you are a member. You have the right to be represented by your union should you encounter any problems with your employer, and you have the right to vote on whether to go on strike or not (if your workplace is under the Trade Union Act). Being part of unionized workplace means you

benefit from these basic things if you are a member in good standing or not. However, without signing a union application form and receiving a union card, our constitution states that you are not a member in good standing and cannot participate fully in union activities. The constitution was created by the membership and is maintained and upheld by the membership with a variety of objectives, including:



“1.3.5. To direct the structure of the Union towards providing participation of the membership so as to ensure that the Union always acts in the best interests of the membership.” ■

# Unions make a difference in our lives.

Unions fought for many of the benefits workers enjoy today: Sick leave, maternity & paternity leave, vacation, minimum wage, paid breaks, overtime, workplace safety standards and regulations. collective bargaining rights, and much more.

Do you know of a group of non-unionized workers who might be interested in joining the NSGEU? Please contact:

Lori Smith, Organizing Officer

902-456-6531 or 1877-556-7438 or [lsmith@nsgeu.ca](mailto:lsmith@nsgeu.ca)



# New NSGEU Staff

Recent staffing changes at NSGEU

I started working for the provincial government in 2016 and moved around to different departments in my time as a civil servant including, Service Nova Scotia and Internal Services, Finance and Treasury Board, Municipal Affairs and Housing, and Community Services. I served in a variety of positions and capacities from daily accounting and transactional services with SNSIS to financial analytics and advisory services with DMAH and FATB, as well as policy research with DCS.

I bring a diverse range of experience and understanding of the public service.

**James Gillies**  
Compensation Analyst/  
Research Officer

My time with NSGEU have been an absolute pleasure, the fast and dynamic style of work brings exciting opportunities and challenges along daily. I have really appreciated the warm welcome from staff, and I'm happy to be putting my abilities to work for the members represented by NSGEU.



I previously worked for Local 1246 Administrative Professional at Dartmouth General Hospital in Voice Services. Previously to that I worked for twenty years as a CCA in Cape Breton.

During this time I was a very active union member and was involved in various activities aimed at supporting and advocating for the rights and interests of union members. I acted as a local secretary, was a member of the Women's Issue Committee, and was elected President of my local for a term.

Working for the NSGEU team and contributing to the NSGEU Professional environment is an honour and I am very excited for this new chapter in my life.

**Michelle Jardine**  
Receptionist-Typist



I previously worked at NSCC, Akerley Campus, where I was a member of Local 267Z and was active in my local. I began at NSGEU as a Servicing Administrative Assistant in February, 2020 and really enjoyed interacting with members and fellow NSGEU staff. In my new role as Executive Assistant to the President, I am excited to use my skills set to take on many new challenges.

**Deidre Trepanier**  
Executive Assistant

Moving to Canada was a significant transition for me, filled with excitement and anticipation for new experiences. Adjusting to a new country, culture, and work environment presented its challenges, but it was also an enriching journey of growth and discovery.

My previous job at NSCC as a Digital Technology Analyst was a pivotal part of my career journey. It provided me with invaluable opportunities to polish my skills in technology while contributing to the educational mission of the institution. Working within a union environment like NSCC instilled in me a strong sense of solidarity and collective empowerment, where every member's voice mattered.

The welcoming and supportive environment at NSGEU has made my transition seamless. Colleagues are not just coworkers; they are friends and allies, always ready to lend a helping hand or offer guidance whenever needed. The collaborative spirit and sense of unity within the organization make every day at work a rewarding experience.

**Ali Mehboob**  
Information Technology  
Officer





# Happy Victoria Day

NSGEU offices will be closed Monday, May 20th



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