



## Turning the Tide Against Domestic Violence

(PG 6-7)



## Civil Service Bargaining Update

(PG 11)



## Triennial Convention

(PG 12-18)

# THE NO-20 STAND

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

Pre-Convention 2025

Dear members,

Never before has the country had to navigate such uncertain circumstances with an ally, friend and neighbour, as we currently find ourselves having to do with President Trump and his tariff attack. These tariffs will have impacts on working people across the country, and here at home. The extent of those impacts is yet to be felt, but the NSGEU is working with our national union and others to plan for these circumstances.

Here in Nova Scotia this uncertainty includes a new Tim Houston supermajority government. This supermajority gives the premier far-reaching power to change the way government is administered and delivered in this province. We have seen attempts to strip away the independent and oversight powers of the Auditor

General, the Freedom of Information Office, and bargaining unit members of Communications Nova Scotia were moved to excluded positions

Civil Service bargaining has reached an impasse, and the union is applying for arbitration. Fair wages and protecting key job security language are some of the main outstanding issues.

The stability of economy, including inflation, are all at-risk. These are the circumstances we find ourselves in as we prepare for the NSGEU Triennial Convention in May, making this one of the most important conventions in recent memory.

The strength of our union is you, the members. Your dedication, commitment and hard work to

deliver programs and services to Nova Scotians is the foundation of public service. Over the coming days and weeks members will begin to announce their candidacy for executive positions which will be determined at convention.

I am pleased to announce that I will be seeking another term as President. Whatever the outcome of convention, we all share one common goal. The union needs to come out of convention with a team united and ready to take on the challenges of the next three years. It won't be easy. We need to rise together and send a strong message that the labour movement is strong, united, and ready to take advantage of the challenges and opportunities of the coming years.

In this edition of The STAND you will have the opportunity to learn about the declared candidates and various campaigns will kick off over the coming weeks. I wish everyone good luck and look forward to all members and delegates having their say at convention.

In solidarity,



Sandra Mullen  
NSGEU President



NSGEU President Sandra Mullen and 1st VP Hugh Gillis with Staff Sgt. Erin Donovan.

FEATURES

- 4-5 Feature: Hi Emergency Attack
- 6-7 Turning the Tide Against Domestic Violence
- 8 Political Update
- 11 Civil Service Bargaining Update
- 12-18 Convention 2025
- 20-23 Celebrating Admin. Professionals
- 24-25 New NSGEU Staff
- 26-27 Around the union in Photos

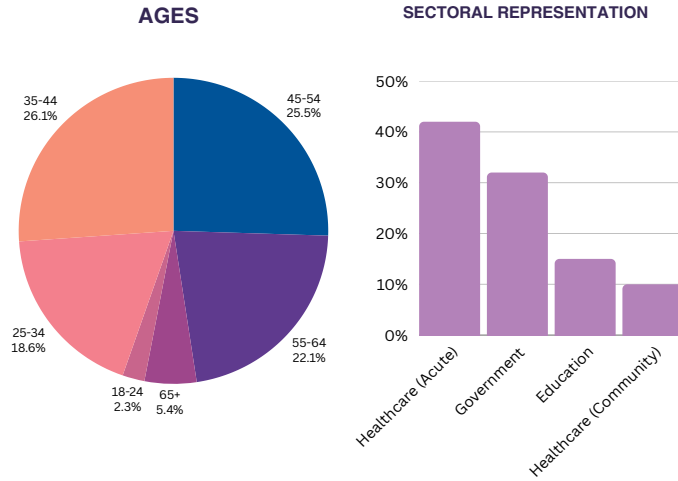
**CONNECT WITH US!**

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)

 [@thensgeu](https://instagram.com/thensgeu)

**YOUR UNION AT A GLANCE**



**THE STAND**

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

**Executive Officers**

- President  
Sandra Mullen  
902-424-4063
- 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President  
Hugh Gillis  
902-322-3543
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President  
Tammy Gillis  
902-759-7530
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President  
Peter Perry  
902-471-9623
- Secretary-Treasurer  
Darren McPhee  
902-449-7778

**Contributors**

- Holly Fraughton
- Shannon MacIntyre
- David MacKenzie
- Sandra Mullen
- Lucas Wide

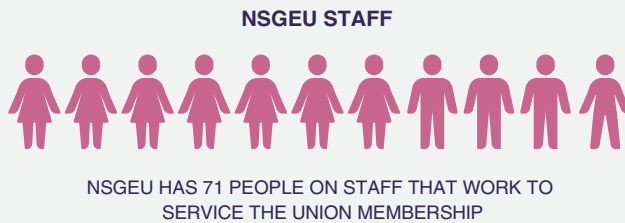
**Contact NSGEU**

902-424-4063  
1-877-556-7438  
[inquiry@nsgeu.ca](mailto:inquiry@nsgeu.ca)

The NSGEU is affiliated with the Canadian Labour Congress, the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour, and the National Union of Public and General Employees.



The Union Stand is proudly produced by NSGEU with the help of members of IAMAW Local 2797.



**MEMBERS**

**38,041**

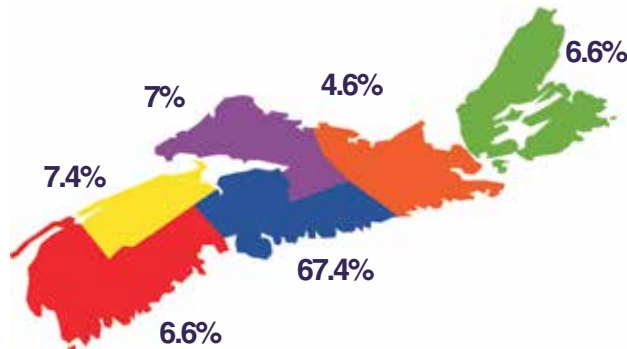
**SIGNED MEMBERS**

**80.4%**

**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.

The role of 1st Vice President is to assist the President and work directly with local executives to strengthen the membership and move the unions agenda forward.

If you have any questions, you can contact Hugh at: [hgillis@nsgeu.ca](mailto:hgillis@nsgeu.ca)



# When the Emergency Department

**O**n the afternoon of January 29th, 2025, Nova Scotia's largest emergency department found itself in the unthinkable position of having to treat its own staff members, after they were suddenly attacked by a patient.

Except as anyone who has worked in that department recently would tell you, the incident wasn't really unthinkable: frontline healthcare workers have long been sounding the alarm about the working conditions in healthcare settings, warning that patient and staff safety is at risk, and that an incident like this could happen.

In fact, in January 2023, the union actually brought these workers' concerns forward to the employer and public with a letter, warning: "There are a lot of frustrated and angry people in the waiting rooms right now, and it is only a matter of time before someone is seriously injured: we need to ensure that every precaution is taken to prevent harm."

Above and beyond that warning, the union created a [comprehensive list of suggested actions](#) the employer could take, based on member input.

Two NSGEU members were seriously injured as a result

of this violent workplace incident, and we are sure many of their colleagues and patients who bore witness to the attack may have also sustained physical injuries and psychological trauma. All workers have a right to a

safe workplace, and that right certainly applies to those who are delivering care in our hospitals.

This incident does seem to have finally spurred the employer into action, at least in this department.

Nova Scotia Health's Incident Management Team (IMT) has established a number of short-term, medium-term, and long-term goals to enhance security within the Halifax Infirmary emergency department. These include appointing an expert in security, engaging the chief of security for the province, installing metal detectors, increasing police and security presence in the ED, repairing broken panic alarms, developing a search policy, instituting a visitor pass system,

and improving ID checks. There are medium- and long-term plans to implement review a number of current safety practices and standards, and to conduct an external security review.

**In addition, NSGEU and NSNU have been working closely to ensure the employer conducts violence in the workplace assessments in NSH workplaces.**



NSGEU president Sandra Mullen, seen speaking at a union rally, says the attacks at the Halifax Infirmary on Wednesday prove that 'exactly what we said could happen did happen.' PHOTO BY TIM KROCHAK FILE /no

Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union president Sandra Mullen said Thursday afternoon that the union has been lobbying for increased security and safety measures at the hospital facilities for a long time.

"Exactly what we said could happen did happen," said Mullen, head of the union that represents two of the injured people.

Mullen said the calls for increased safety included worries about frequent Code Criticals being called as far back as 2018, along with concerns voiced more recently by NSGEU members working in nursing and critical care.

"Concerns were that there wasn't an ability to stop folks from coming in with weapons," Mullen said.

# Becomes a Crime Scene

A committee of the unions and health and safety professionals from NSH have developed a new assessment tool for workplace violence. A priority has been set for emergency departments and mental health units within the EDs. The assessments should be completed by the end of April.

While we are glad to see the employer take action in the wake of the January 29th incident, we plan to continue to hold them accountable for safer working conditions for all health care work sites, not just the HI ED.

## Halifax man faces multiple charges after four injured at Infirmiry

Freddie Campbell  
Published Jan 30, 2025 • Last updated Feb 04, 2025 • 4 min read



Halifax Regional Police took a person into custody after four people were injured during a weapons incident in the emergency department at the Halifax Infirmiry on Wednesday afternoon. PHOTO BY TIM KROCIK / The Chronicle Herald

## Man charged with attempted murder after 2 Halifax hospital employees stabbed

Nicholas Robert Coulombe, 32, is facing 9 charges

CBC News - Posted: Jan 30, 2025 12:45 PM AST | Last Updated: January 30



Nicholas Robert Coulombe is shown in February 2024 outside of his tent in Grand Parade in Halifax. (Brett Ruskin/CBC)

## Armed patient allegedly injures three hospital staff in Halifax emergency room

HALIFAX - Three hospital employees were injured in what Nova Scotia's health minister says was an armed assault by a patient Wednesday afternoon at the Halifax Infirmiry emergency department.

Updated Jan. 29, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. Jan. 29, 2025 2 min read



A pedestrian walks past the Halifax Infirmiry, in Halifax, Tuesday, April 24, 2012. THE CANADIAN PRESS/Andrew Vaughan

Andrew Vaughan The Canadian Pres

## Patient attacks 3 health-care workers at Halifax ER

Halifax police took patient into custody, health minister says 'threat has been contained'

CBC News - Posted: Jan 29, 2025 3:29 PM AST | Last Updated: January 29



It happened Wednesday afternoon at the Halifax Infirmiry emergency department, where two of the staff were stabbed, according to sources. Luke Ettinger has the story.

# Turning the Tide against domestic

## Union launches employer-facing campaign to help take action against domestic

**O**n Friday, March 7th, dozens of union activists and prominent community members gathered in the early morning hours to celebrate International Women's Day in our Convention Centre.

After the official Nova Scotia Federation of Labour's events were over, many of those same guests spilled over into our solarium to hear NSGEU President Sandra Mullen announce an important new campaign that is designed

to raise awareness of and support for an issue that has recently had a devastating impact on our community: domestic violence.

Domestic violence has resulted in at least eight known deaths since October 2024.

Federal statistics show that the number of reported acts of intimate partner violence causing violent harm or death has risen in Nova Scotia from 2,972 to 3,187. Since 2019, the number of women and children seeking help from women's shelters in this province has increased by 182 per cent. And these are just the reported and known statistics.

"Domestic violence doesn't stop at home: it permeates all areas of our lives, including our workplaces," said NSGEU President Sandra Mullen, "Many NSGEU members working on the front line – social workers, health care workers, correctional officers, and many

more – work with victims and survivors of domestic violence on a regular basis, and bear witness to the toll it takes on these individuals and the people who care for them."

Moreover, workers experiencing domestic violence report that the abuse often permeates their own workplace in the form of abusive phone calls or text messages, stalking or harassment, and that it affects their work performance and attendance, as well as their coworkers.

There is also the serious risk that perpetrators may come into the workplace and commit acts of violence.

As a union representing 38,000 workers – more than 70 per cent of whom are women and are therefore



disproportionately impacted by domestic violence – the NSGEU recognizes we have an important role to play in trying to address this crisis.

Specifically, recommendation #14 of the Mass Casualty Report calls for mobilizing a society-wide response, which includes "Non-governmental bodies, including learning institutions, professional and trade associations, and businesses, declare gender-based, intimate partner, and family violence to be an epidemic that warrants a meaningful and sustained society-wide response."

That is why the NSGEU is calling on employers to help

# violence

## violence within the workplace

Turn the Tide, and sign on to a pledge, which both recognizes the epidemic of domestic violence and calls on them to take steps towards addressing it.

All employers in Nova Scotia are encouraged to sign on. Those who successfully complete action items towards fulfilling their pledge will receive a sign that identifies them as an organization that has taken a meaningful step towards ending this epidemic.

We hope many of the employers representing our members will choose to show leadership and sign on to this important campaign as a first step towards addressing this crisis.

But all employers in Nova Scotia are encouraged to sign on. ■



# Political Update

The political landscape is changing by the day and there is no indication when this period of uncertainty will end.

Justin Trudeau is out as Prime Minister, replaced by newly elected Liberal Leader Mark Carney. This change comes at a time when American President Donald Trump has launched an unprovoked tariff war on Canada, putting the economy and the jobs of working people on both sides of the border at risk.

Our new Prime Minister has also called a federal general election. Canadians will have to choose who they think is best positioned to push back on the Trump Administration, manage the economy, and make life more affordable for families.

Conservative leader Pierre Poilievre, Liberal leader Mark Carney, and NDP leader Jagmeet Singh will all try to position their party as the one best able to meet the needs of Canadians.

Meanwhile, Nova Scotians are seeing how Tim Houston plans to use his Conservative supermajority in the legislature with an early spring legislative sitting.

The Houston government wasted no time in flexing its new political muscles with the introduction of their first piece of legislation, called Bill 1. It is a massive bill that includes a wide range of changes to how government is held accountable and attempts to limit the amount of oversight.

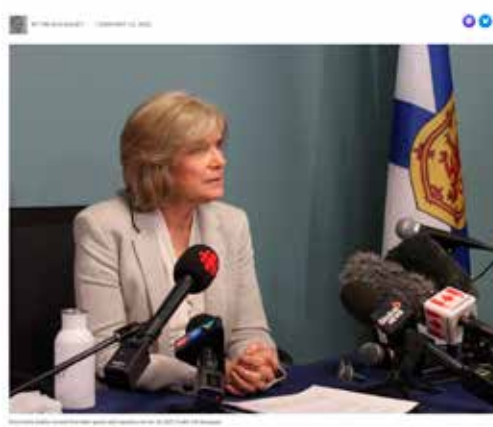
The legislation proposed stripping the province's Auditor General of their independence by giving the government the authority to limit the AGs reports and give government the ability to fire the AG without just cause. Similar measures were proposed for the freedom of information office, giving the government the ability to reduce transparency and influence the flow of public information.

The opposition parties pushed back on these changes and Nova Scotians were listening and made their voices

heard as well. As the pressure mounted the Premier announced he would remove the changes to the AG and Freedom of Information from the legislation.

There are still other provisions in the legislation that are threatening to working families. The government wants the authority to fire excluded employees without just cause. The government also wants to power to then determine the severance paid to those fired employees. This change, even if passed, would not impact unionized members, however, it does set a tone for how this government views the value of civil servants.

**Premier Tim Houston backs down from legislation to take away the independence of the Auditor General's office**



The Premier, in a letter to civil servants, talked about his preference for workers who are “problem solvers” over workers who are “problem stretchers.” This phrase, while a nice sound bite for the media, doesn’t consider the many civil servants who are doing their best, while being understaffed, under resourced, and over worked. If an employee raises concerns about a government policy or goal, will they be seen as a “problem stretcher” and be fired without just cause?

This kind of power grab by government highlights the importance of the labour movement to protect members and negotiate fair collective agreements. The civil service bargaining unit is currently negotiating a new collective agreement, and the government is attempting to remove some key job security language.

The Houston government did not campaign on a plan to fire excluded employees without just cause or strip the AG of their independence. The power of the supermajority is real, and the union is ready to stand up for our members and protect and enforce the rights contained in your collective agreements.

At no time has both federal and provincial politics had such a real impact on working families. Workers must stand united to protect the benefits and wages that people depend on. ■

# Shining a Light On Corrections

**A**t the beginning on March, the NSGEU launched a public campaign to help raise awareness of the many long-standing challenges faced by Correctional Officers in the workplace.

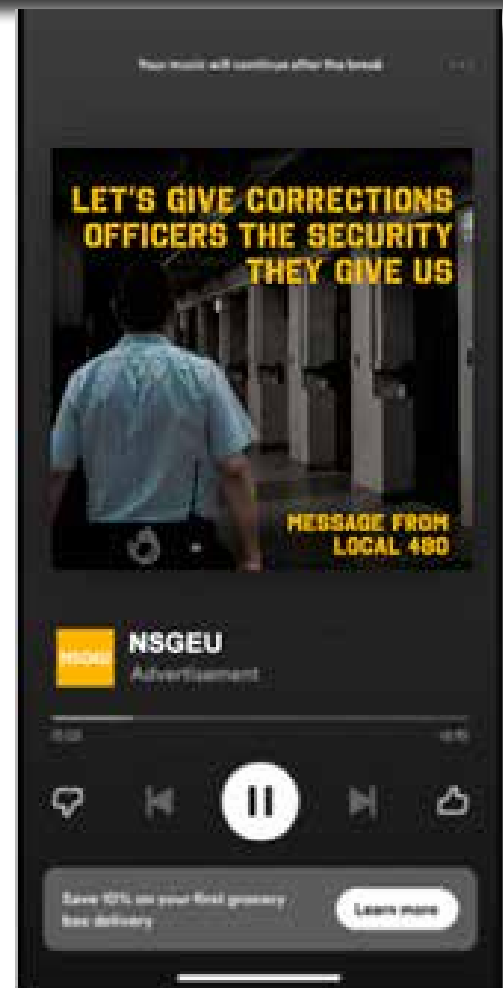
The union has been vocal about these ongoing issues, calling on the Department of Justice to take action to address pay inequities amongst Correctional Officers and Deputy Sheriffs which have led to chronic staffing shortages and safety concerns for both workers and inmates. Union leadership has met with the former Minister of Justice to discuss these concerns, there have been many meetings with management, and a rally was held earlier this year, as well. At the same time, the union has been working through the formal reclassification process, a process which has ultimately resulted in the filing of a formal grievance.

Despite our best efforts to work with government to address these concerns, it was time to take our fight to the public.

Our four-week campaign aired on radio and digital audio platforms (like Spotify and podcasts), geographically targeting the four communities our provincial jails are located within, as well as the Nova Scotia Legislature in downtown Halifax.

The campaign was also featured on four digital billboards in high-traffic locations within Halifax Regional Municipality.

These radio and billboard advertisements are designed to help raise public awareness of the conditions our members are working within, and pressure decision-makers to take action towards improving compensation and safety for Correctional Officers in Nova Scotia. ■



# A Win for VON Members

**N**SGEU along with NSNU, OPSEU, ONA, CUPE, and SEIU announced a significant arbitration award from Arbitrator William Kaplan on January 22nd, 2025.

This award requires VON to make substantial pension improvements for plan members, addressing long-standing grievances related to VON's failure to restore benefits when the Plan reached a surplus level. These improvements have an effective date of December 11th, 2024, but the actual improvements will not be fully implemented until after a valuation of the Plan has been completed (estimated to be September 30th, 2025).

## Background:

In 2006, in response to a plan deficit, VON imposed a major cut to our pension plan, reducing the rate at which members earn benefits by about one third – the factor for calculating pensions was reduced from 1.5% and 2% to 1% and 1.33% to earnings under and above the Year's Maximum Pensionable Earnings limit ("YMPE"), respectively. This cut has remained in place ever since.

In 2010, in response to VON's request for solvency funding relief, we secured an agreement from VON that included a number of commitments related to the pension plan including that benefits would be restored to pre-2006 levels once the plan had a sufficient surplus.

In 2013, in response to VON's second request for solvency funding relief, we secured a second pension agreement from VON, including a commitment for additional benefit improvements, subject to certain conditions, once the 2006 cuts had been reversed. These improvements would increase benefits for pensioners (retirees who are receiving a pension and former employees who will start receiving a VON pension when they retire).

In 2020, we believed that the required conditions had

been met and notified VON that it was time to fulfill its commitment to restore plan benefits. In the absence of any changes to the plan, the unions filed grievances seeking VON's compliance with the 2010 agreement. After filing those grievances, we attempted various settlement talks with VON, which were not successful.

The dispute was ultimately heard in a series of arbitration dates in 2024 and Arbitrator William Kaplan.

## Key points:

- Restoration of the basic pension formula to nearly pre-2006 levels for active members, funded by \$54 million of the pension plan surplus.
  - Future pension entitlements will be earned at pre-2006 rates.
  - Pensioners who earned a pension after January 1st, 2006, will receive a one-time cost of living improvement, funded by \$7 million of the surplus.
  - All retired members will see an additional \$3.1 million allocated for a one-time cost of living increase.
  - An additional \$12 million of the surplus will be used for further cost of living improvements over the next 15 years.
  - VON must contribute at least as much to the pension plan as members, addressing past shortfalls in contributions.
  - Going forward, member contribution rates may change based on the amounts needed to properly fund the benefits.
  - The award resolves the unions' grievances and ensures VON cannot unilaterally cut benefits without union consent.
- The unions' collective efforts, over nearly two decades, secured these improvements for our members.
- Submitted by Corinne Carey, NSGEU Pension & Benefits Officer ■



# Civil Service Rejects Employers Offer

Members in the civil service bargaining unit followed the recommendation of their bargaining committee and voted overwhelmingly to reject the employers offer.

Ninety-nine per cent of the members who voted, voted to reject the offer. This sent a clear message to the government that NSGEU members are not going to accept significant concessions on job security and wages must reflect the current state of the economy and the real impact inflation has had on people's bank accounts.

The union received the government's offer and after a thorough review the bargaining committee recommended to members it be rejected.

Union President Sandra Mullen, along with the bargaining committee, and Executive Director Nicole McKim held a series of information sessions to review the offer with members. The sessions were well attended, and it was clear that offer from government did not meet the expectation and needs of members.

The main points of concern were wages and job security language that currently exists, and government's attempt to remove some provisions, specifically MOU #2 which gave unionized civil servants strong job security protections.

The union and bargaining committee are now applying to the Labour Board to move to this process to a

mediation/arbitration. This process will allow for some future bargaining to remove any additional items where the two sides are close to agreement. All outstanding matters will move to arbitration for a final decision.

It is important context that while these negotiations were taking place the government introduced legislation that removed several civil service employees out of their unionized positions and placed them into excluded positions. The union was not consulted on

these moves and those impacted, while they got to keep their jobs, have lost the benefits and rights they previously had under the collective agreement.

In addition, the government has introduced legislation to make it easier to fire excluded

employees without just cause and gives government the authority to determine the severance for each fired employee.

Under these circumstances it is particularly important that the union fight to maintain all job security provisions within the collective agreement as well as any MOUs that help strengthen workers rights.

The arbitration process will take time to get started. The bargaining committee and union will continue to communicate with members as the process moves forward. ■



# What to expect at NSGEU's 2025 Triennial Convention

Convention is the most significant – and exciting – event the NSGEU organizes and hosts.

Every three years, a diverse cross-section of our members are elected to represent their respective locals, and they converge for a three-day convention held in downtown Halifax. There, the future of your union is shaped through a series of resolutions that are introduced and debated, and through the election of a new leadership team.

Since the NSGEU's founding Convention was held in 1958, this event has established the direction and core principles of our union, which proudly represents more than 38,000 workers delivering valuable public services throughout Nova Scotia.

This year's Convention, which will be held from May 21st to 23rd at the Halifax Convention Centre, will be the largest we've held to-date, including 385 voting delegates! Our theme is: "Rise Together," echoing the unifying message of our recent branding campaign.

Throughout the course of the three days of Convention, elected delegates will have the rare opportunity to step outside of the workplace and their daily lives to discover the true spirit of solidarity. They will have input into a range of causes that are at the heart of NSGEU's commitment to the community, as well as a range of

key initiatives and issues that matter to all of us.

Convention can, of course, seem a bit overwhelming at first, especially to new attendees. Rest assured, however, there are "rules of order" that govern when people can speak and what they can speak about. These rules are in place to ensure fair, safe and open debate. To help first-time delegates get familiar with these rules, the NSGEU hosts a New Delegate

Seminar on the first day of Convention Wednesday, May 21st starting at 1:30 pm. It is highly recommended that new delegates attend this seminar.

We are confident that anyone who attends 2025 Convention will find it to be an immersing and empowering experience: one where new friendships are forged, connections are made, and our members are able to make a meaningful



contribution to the future of the

NSGEU. We look forward to seeing all the elected delegates, observers and Committee members at Convention! ■



## Executive Committee Elections

**Meet the candidates who have announced they are seeking election for the 2025 term**

All of the delegates who attend this year's Triennial Convention will help to determine the NSGEU's priorities and direction for the next three-year term. But it's ultimately the responsibility of the NSGEU's five-person Executive Committee to ensure those priorities and directions are carried out!

The Executive Committee is elected by Convention delegates on the final day of Convention (May 23rd). Any Convention delegate can run for a position, and they may seek nomination up until the end of day on Thursday, May 22nd. So far, six people have announced they are seeking election for the Executive Committee.

Read about each of the candidates in the following pages!

## Presidential Candidate: Sandra Mullen

Greetings NSGEU Members and Delegates,

It has been my honour to serve as your President the past term. Collectively, we have worked together through some very challenging times. With your hard work, our efforts have made tremendous impacts on the lives of workers throughout the province.

Since our last Convention, I have worked closely with the membership, the Executive, Board and staff, as we navigated our first strike in 14 years, negotiated many contracts that have had positive impacts on the lives of many. We continue to deal with serious safety and workplace concerns, face challenges at the bargaining table knowing the impact one table has on another.

A local 16 member, I have held many roles and recognized local mentorship is a vital responsibility to ensure the ongoing strength of our union. Navigating the path forward and emerging from the pandemic, engaging our membership remains my priority.

The decisions made at the executive table are often made quickly; this requires strong leadership skills, good insight and the ability to multitask. My experiences from my work, union education and volunteering have provided me with those skills. My Union experience includes all the responsibilities and roles of the President,

Occupational Bargaining Council-BUNC

Bargaining committee member for Staff

Executive positions & Board member, 1st VP NSFL,

Harvard Trade Union Program- NUPGE Scholarship.

Director/ National Executive Board, NUPGE & Women's Advisory Council.

CLC Women's Committee. United Nations Commission on Status of Women Delegate

NSGEU education,

Board member Nova Scotia Health Coalition

Representative on Child Care Nova Scotia, NUPGE Childcare committee

Delegate to Conventions of NSFL, NUPGE and CLC.

Executive Liaison for NSGEU committees and Councils

Together, I plan to continue building the NSGEU brand, showing Nova Scotians the invaluable work that our members do. We will continue to work with organizations on your behalf as we strive to be good corporate partners with Feed Nova Scotia, United Way,

Cancer NS, and forge new and ongoing relationships with our indigenous community. Together, let's continue to build our reputation as a trusted, diverse, responsible organization so that our members continue to be respected.

I look to you for your expertise and support as we prepare for what lies ahead, we need to work together knowing that globally, we are in uncertain times.

Like many of you, home life is busy. I live in Weymouth with rural NS challenges, I recognize the extra stress that we face, impacts of inflation, housing crisis, and the uncertain impacts from what this tariff war will bring. Preparing for what lies ahead will require a collective effort, recovery and rebuilding will bring many challenges. We depend on our services to ensure the wellbeing of our families and communities. Whether it's Homecare, healthcare, education or public services, the work that you do matters. As taxpayers, we all have a vested interest in services we provide and work hard at making this the best province to raise our families.

Thanks to my Family, Executive, Board of Directors, members and my local, for their tremendous support during this past term and for allowing me such rewarding opportunities. Thank you for sharing your personal stories and concerns. Your efforts have mentored and inspired me.

Make no mistake, across this country workers' rights are under attack. Union solidarity is at the forefront of the labour movement, let's be part of the united front.

Proud to re-offer as your President, I humbly ask for your support, we have much more to do.

As we prepare for Convention 2025, I look forward to hearing your concerns and sharing my ideas. Let's Rise Together.

In Solidarity,

Sandra Mullen



# 1st Vice-President Candidate: Hugh Gillis

Welcome, Bienvenue, Pjla'si

I am proud to announce that I will be re-offering for the position of 1st Vice President of NSGEU at our 2025 convention - Rise Together.

It has been my honour to serve as your 1st Vice President in a full-time capacity this past term. Collectively we have much to be proud of and much more work still to do.

Experience:

- National Executive Board Member, National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE), second largest union in Canada with 425,000 members.
- Trustee for the Public Service Superannuation Plan. Member of Audit Actuary Risk Committee and Investments Committee.
- Accompany the President regularly when meeting with government officials and employers.
- Local and membership engagement.
- Board strategic plan.
- Media experience.
- Executive liaison - Equity Council, Young Worker Council, Ad Hoc Young Worker Committee, Human Rights Committee, Metro A Regional Council & Cape Breton Regional Council.

Born and raised in rural Cape Breton, I have worked as a Correctional Officer with Department of Justice. I have served as a Steward, Vice President, President of Local 480. In addition, I have co-chaired the Adult Correctional Facilities Occupational Health and Safety Provincial Committee. I have completed many NSGEU workshops including NSGEU Week-Long School and NUPGE Leadership Development Program.

I am a graduate of the NSCC, Truro Campus and Cape Breton University. I was recently invited and sponsored by our National Union to attend the Harvard University Trade Union Program in Boston, Massachusetts.

Proud to represent the NSGEU in the broader labour movement, I am the past Secretary Treasurer of Nova Scotia Federation of Labour (70,000 members). I chaired the Finance Committee and was a member of Human Resources and Bargaining Committee.

NSGEU represents almost 38,000 members, and it is clear we need publicly funded, publicly delivered health

care now more than ever. Going forward, we need to be very strategic to mobilize our membership with the appropriate resources and find new solutions to take on anyone who threatens our jobs.

I am proud of the NSGEU Board of Directors' recent decision for prioritizing Health and Safety this term. We need to strengthen our Occupational Health and Safety Committees, workplace practices and build safer workspaces for all our members.

I was proud to be invited and sponsored by NUPGE to participate in a global conference on 2SLGBTQIA+ issues in Cape Town South Africa in 2024. The rise of hate particularly from south of the border is terrifying. It is incumbent upon all of us to strongly push back. NSGEU must continue to work on equity, diversity, and inclusion in providing safe spaces for all our members.

Child poverty, food security and affordable housing remain key issues in the labour movement. Tackling these acute community issues is of great importance to me. I currently sit as Vice- Chair Board of Directors United Way Cape Breton to help create meaningful dialogue and creative solutions to address these issues.

I would like to thank President Mullen, the Executive, Board of Directors, the membership for investing in me. I have much more to offer and much more to learn.

I look forward to speaking with you leading up to our convention, and I respectfully asked for your support to continue as your 1st Vice President.

In Solidarity,

Hugh Gillis, he/him

(902) 322-3543



# 1st Vice-President Candidate: Mary Otto

Hello fellow NSGEU members,

I am excited to announce my candidacy for 1st Vice President of NSGEU at our upcoming Triennial Convention in May.

I was lucky 23 years ago when I landed a job at Canadian Blood Services, and with that came the best membership you could ask for—a union card. Over these two decades, I've immersed myself in the NSGEU, learning its structure inside and out, from the local level to Regional & Occupational Council, facilitating, serving multiple terms on the Board of Directors, as a VP at the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour and beyond. Along the way, I've developed lasting relationships with many in the Labour and Social Justice movements. These experiences have shaped who I am today, and I am committed to helping others in the same way. I want every member to feel they have a voice at the table, to mentor others, and help them grow within the union just as I have. I'm ready to take on this role and ensure the next generation of leaders is prepared.

I am running for 1st Vice President because I believe in the power of unions to protect workers, strengthen communities, and defend democracy. The political landscape is shifting in troubling ways, both south of the border and here at home. We are seeing a rise in anti-2SLGBTQIA+ rhetoric, trying to erase trans folks, attacks on reproductive rights, and the scapegoating of marginalized communities, including refugees, international students, and migrant workers. These harmful trends undermine the rights and dignity of workers, and now, more than ever, we need principled, vocal leadership in the labour movement to push back against these harmful narratives and policies.

I also believe it's more important than ever that we have strong female and gender-diverse voices at the table in leadership roles, ready to fight back and help reshape and fix broken systems. We need to ensure NSGEU continues to push for equity, inclusion, and meaningful change. I am incredibly proud of the work our union has done in these areas, but there is more to be done. We need to break down barriers and create spaces where all members feel seen, heard, and empowered to take on leadership roles themselves.

Here at home, the Houston government is actively working to erode democratic processes by limiting media scrutiny, curbing debate, and reducing

consultation with “special interest groups.” Let's be clear: we, the workers, are those special interest groups. When governments try to shut us out, it's because they know our voices are powerful. That's why we must continue to organize, advocate, and hold governments accountable.

As a union, we are non-partisan, but we cannot afford to be apolitical. Government decisions, regardless of party, directly impact workers' rights, public services, and our communities. We must be prepared to hold any government accountable when their policies harm workers and undermine the services we all rely on. A strong labour movement is essential to protect democracy, ensure fair workplaces, and fight against privatization and austerity.

The labour movement is strongest when we unite. When we fight back against privatization, austerity, and attacks on public services. When we stand for equity, fairness, and workers' rights. When we support each other in our workplaces, at the bargaining table, and in the streets. I'm ready to take on this fight as your 1st Vice President, and I hope to earn your support. Please reach out if you'd like to chat or have questions. I look forward to connecting with as many of you as possible before and during Convention.

In Solidarity,  
Mary Otto



## 2nd Vice-President Candidate: Nicole Turple

Hello NSGEU Members,

My name is Nicole Turple, and I am excited to announce my intention to offer for the position of 2nd Vice President at the NSGEU "Rise Together" Convention. I want to thank convention delegates for helping shape the upcoming term, including choosing a new executive team to lead us during a time with much uncertainty around the world and close to home. Uncertainty that is a threat to us all, the working class.

For those who don't know me, I live in a small town called Chaswood (Musquodoboit Valley region of HRM). I am the President of Local 7 (Civil Servant Clerical staff in HRM), and work in Halifax as a Secretary 3 within the Department of Health & Wellness, supporting the Primary, Urgent, & Emergency Care team. Before moving to this role in 2022, I worked as a Wildlife Park Attendant in Shubenacadie (Local 3) since 2015.

My union involvement started in 2017, and it has been a whirlwind ever since. I have learned about the labour movement and why we need more activists within the province, and across the country. Over these 8 years I have had the honour of serving in many roles, such as Board of Directors Representative, Education Facilitator, VP of Young Workers on the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour (NSFL), NSGEU Ad-Hoc (plus NSFL) Young Worker Committee Chairperson, Civil Service UNC member (Bargaining), Steward, Secretary, Chief Steward, Regional Councillor & Chairperson, and Occupational Councillor. I also had the opportunity to attend our national union's (NUPGE) Young Worker Conference + leadership school, and represented NSGEU/NUPGE at the International Duke of Edinburgh Commonwealth Study Conference which was for emerging leaders across various sectors.

I am passionate about standing up for our members, our communities, and our sister unions. Perhaps I have met you at a rally or picket line while battling against the threat of privatization in healthcare, while highlighting that our Corrections members are the lowest paid across Canada, supporting anti-scab legislation, supporting postal workers with CUPW, walking the line with our PSAC union siblings, supporting Pete's Frootique staff of SEIU with their fight for a first contract, or standing up against scab-labour with UNIFOR Autoport workers. Perhaps I met

you at one of the Pride Parades across the province, at the NSGEU Oakfield Picnic, at the NSGEU Riverbreeze Cornmaze event, while facilitating an education course, or while you were attending the Young Worker Conference or Open House. If after all the above I still haven't met you yet, I hope that my drive and passion to support you and your fellow members, in whatever capacity you need, is evident.

This next term will present many challenges to our members and to our province. With the economic uncertainty of international tariffs, the intimate partner violence epidemic, the increase in hate speech, the healthcare and housing crisis, the increase of violence in the workplace, and the increased privatization of public services, it is crucial that the NSGEU have a strong leadership team. Now, more than ever, the NSGEU needs to be the leaders of the labour movement, diversity-equity-inclusion, social justice, and overall must defend the working class. It is my mission to be a voice to all members and to help recruit more young workers into active roles with the NSGEU. I commit to being open to hearing from every member, and every Local. Communication is key in becoming a voice for all members, and I hope that I can be your voice as NSGEU 2nd Vice President. Because together we are united, and united we are stronger.

In solidarity,

Nicole Turple



## 2nd Vice-President Candidate: Tammy Gillis

I am Tammy Gillis, and I am your NSGEU 2nd Vice President. I would like to tell you a bit about myself and why I want to continue in this role.

Yesterday afternoon, an acquaintance that I met through community volunteering put a post on her Facebook asking that voters not turn their backs on Pierre Poilievre in the upcoming election because of his vote against funding a national school lunch program. She said that as a woman who chose not to have children, she doesn't think her tax dollars should be used to feed children when that is the job of parents. Now, I knew she was a supporter of the Progressive Conservative Party, but I thought she was more progressive than conservative: I guess I was wrong. But, I get that; she works in the private sector in injury and insurance law, so she doesn't believe in the one for all and all for one notion where resources are shared. But she needs to remember that hungry children cannot learn and succeed and will not go on to become doctors or nurses, police officers or even lawyers—all professions we really need in our society.

Today, as I went into a local business, I made eye contact with a gentleman standing off to the side of the entrance, holding a sign that said "Hungry, anything helps". I said hello to him, as I saw others avoid him, and made a note to get some cashback when I paid for my purchases. On the way out, I handed him some money and he smiled and thanked me. It did not hurt a bit to be kind to this gentleman. I have been fortunate enough to have been able to go to school and get a university degree that enabled me to get a job that pays a decent wage. I wished as I walked away that I could give him enough to eat for the next month, or even the next week, but that's not in my budget. But I know that if enough people like me give him a few dollars, he could eat for a while.

It is that kind of collective effort, where many pull together to accomplish something that no one person could, that drew me to become involved with our union. The pooling of our resources and efforts to achieve something great, many hands make light work—those are ideals I hold dear.

In my workplace, as a Family Court Officer and the Small Claims Court Officer, I am able to help people

every day. Many of these folks are not exactly having their best day: they may be getting evicted from a rental they couldn't afford but had to take or be homeless, they may not have seen their young children for months. In every interaction I seek to find ways to try to put something positive into their really awful day.

It is for that reason that I got involved with my union at my first meeting back in 2009. I knew that as a group, we can do great things, but even as an individual, we can always try to find a way to make someone's day a little better.

It has been my absolute privilege to help members that I met in local, council and committee meetings, in local officer training and at NSGEU events, and I would love to have your support to find more ways to keep doing that for NSGEU's members.

In Solidarity,  
Tammy Gillis



## Secretary Treasurer Candidate: Darren McPhee

NSGEU Members,

It has been a privilege to represent you as NSGEU Secretary Treasurer for my 9th term. I convey my intention to re-offer for the position of your Secretary/Treasurer for the 2025-2028 term. I welcome the opportunity to represent you again with the same energy and pride I have felt since 2003.

This past term, I felt confident with NSGEU's strong financial position that at NSGEU could finance all necessary campaigns, job actions and challenges we faced. We will continue to enhance this strength and healthy financial position as it is this continued stability that ensures NSGEU will always have the resources to fight any threats that would erode our members rights in the years ahead.

I am fair, honest and approachable and believe all financial matters are sensitive and important issues. I have used these beliefs over the past 22 years to guide recommendations that strengthen our Union as your Secretary Treasurer. I have consistently demonstrated my abilities as both a leader and team member within the NSGEU Executive Board and all roles held in NSGEU. As well as being your Chief Financial Officer, I am also proud of leading many previous initiatives over the years on your behalf such as;

- Several terms Leading NSGEU's Strategic Planning with the Board of Directors.
- Project Managing the NSGEU Building from inception to move in Aug 2013. This Building continues to provide the location for continued activism for members to conduct business for NSGEU.

I would like to thank my family – Allana, Lachlan and Kieran once again for their continued support and understanding while I worked on your behalf within the Trade Union movement. It is this support which has allowed me to continue with confidence to fulfill my obligations to you. I would like to thank the NSGEU membership, Executive, Board of Directors, and the staff for their support and guidance this term as we faced many new challenges. It is with pride and satisfaction I say:

We will Continue together through this next term, as Proud members of NSGEU, United in Solidarity, Building A Better Future for Our Members!!!

It has been amazing to complete another successful term together with you building one of the Strongest Union voices in Atlantic Canada. It is with a continued passion and pride representing you, I ask for your support in offering once again for the position of NSGEU Secretary Treasurer.

Thank You,  
In Solidarity,  
Darren McPhee



# Steward Profile: Brandy Hartley

470 NS Liquor Corporation - Stores & Warehouses NSLC

## What made you want to become a steward?

I wanted to learn more about our union and help employees who may have issues or concerns.

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

General questions about our collective agreement.

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

No.

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

Communication, observation, and openness.

## Would you recommend other people become a Steward in their workplace and why or why not?

Absolutely, it's a great learning opportunity for yourself and others and you can help your co-workers, spread news and communicate.



## NSGEU's Cancer Care Fund

**T**he 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 for 2024, we gave out a total of \$11,400 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>

# Celebrating our Administrative Professionals

The following member profiles have been submitted on behalf of the Administrative Professionals Occupational Council in honour of Administrative Professionals' Week, which we celebrate from April 21st to 25th. Thank you for the important work that you do in all sectors and settings: your work is invaluable and does not go unnoticed.

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

I am Andie Cote, and I currently serve as a Clerk for the Patient Support Line at the Nova Scotia Cancer Centre. In this role, I assist cancer patients by addressing their needs and requests between appointments. These include tasks such as processing medication requests, providing necessary documents, managing new symptoms, and scheduling appointments, ensuring patients receive timely support and care during their treatment journey.

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

Cancer has hit close to home, and I am truly grateful for the opportunity to serve others navigating similar experiences. I have held my current position at the Nova Scotia Cancer Centre for four years, during which time I have been able to provide valuable support to cancer patients. I was seeking permanent, full-time employment when I began this role, and my background in public speaking, and customer service has allowed me to effectively connect with and assist individuals in their time of need.

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

I am deeply passionate about my role and take great satisfaction in connecting with clients on a one-on-one basis. The challenges of troubleshooting, problem-solving, and going the extra mile to ensure each patient's needs are met are aspects of the job that I truly enjoy. Additionally, I am grateful for the flexibility that comes with the option to work from home, which allows me to balance my professional responsibilities while maintaining a healthy work-life dynamic.

Do you have a best day? Worst day?

Each day brings new experiences and challenges in my role. Our department handles approximately 110 calls daily, and I find great fulfillment in the variety of inquiries we receive. Being able to assist cancer patients throughout their journey is incredibly rewarding, and I take pride in offering support and guidance to individuals during such an important time in their lives.



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

When you call any medical facility, please know that we take care of your personal health information and respect your privacy. However, we need your correct health details to find you in our system and give you the best help possible.

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

My name is Norma MacNeil, and I am a Registration Clerk with Early Psychosis Mental Health and Addictions.

I manage appointment scheduling, handle faxes, emails, and phone calls, and confirm fax receipt with pharmacies. I ensure patient information is accurate in Star, label and send documents to One Content, and print daily resident schedules.

I help misplaced patients/visitors, and distribute bus passes, taxi chits, and parking passes. I send appointment reminders via text and support the family social worker in locating parent information in Star.

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

I have been working as a Clerk B since 2021, joining Nova Scotia Health during the COVID-19 pandemic with the primary goal of aiding during a critical time. I had the privilege of working alongside wonderful colleagues at the Dartmouth General drive-thru.

In April 2024, I transitioned to the Early Psychosis Mental Health and Addictions

Registration Clerk role because my previous position was shifting to 12-hour shifts, and I sought a role that would better suit my needs.

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

In my role, I have the privilege of interacting face-to-face with patients, which brings both challenges and great rewards. I often receive calls from concerned parents and listen to patients as they share their thoughts with me at my desk. What makes this work so meaningful is the opportunity to connect with patients on a personal level. Many have shared exciting milestones with me, such as starting school, beginning a new job, or expecting a child. It's especially heartwarming when patients tell me that I'm their favorite on the team. Knowing that I can make a positive impact and help individuals with mental health concerns feel valued and special is one of the most rewarding aspects of my job.

Do you have a best day? Worst day?

The most challenging moments of my day occur when I have a parent in front of me, visibly distressed. It can be difficult to offer the right words of comfort as they navigate such trying circumstances. However, the most rewarding part of my day is when I'm able to resolve a patient's issue efficiently, such as getting them to an urgent appointment. Being able to make a tangible difference in their care brings me a great sense of fulfillment.

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

It is essential for the public to recognize the importance of mental health and the significant role it plays in overall well-being. The work I do is vital in supporting patients and their families, and having the right professionals in place is crucial for providing the support and care needed. My role is an integral part of the team ensuring that individuals receive the proper care and attention they deserve.



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

My name is Palak Desai. I work at Nova Scotia Health- Rehabilitation and arthritis center site as Booking and Registration Clerk- B.

Imagine walking into a bustling healthcare facility, where every second counts, and countless moving pieces need to come together perfectly. In the heart of all this, there's a Clerk B, always on the go, quietly ensuring the wheels keep turning smoothly.

As the first point of contact, this Clerk B greets patients, helping them with registrations and guiding them through the necessary paperwork. With a warm smile, they schedule appointments, always double-checking that each patient is seen promptly and with care. They juggle multiple tasks at once – from updating health records to making sure files are filed correctly and confidentially.

Behind the scenes, they manage important communications, ensuring doctors, nurses, and staff are informed. They compile reports, keeping track of crucial data, and assist with billing, ensuring everything is in order for both patients and the healthcare team. It's a job that requires organization, attention to detail, and a lot of patience. But most importantly, the Clerk B is a key player in ensuring that everything runs like clockwork, making sure patients feel taken care of and that no detail is overlooked.

In the fast-paced world of healthcare, the Clerk B is the calm that holds it all together.

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

I have been working with NS Health for 1.5 years. The idea of playing a role in something that directly impacts people's well-being is inspiring. I realize that my knack for organization and my ability to stay cool under pressure is a perfect fit for this kind of work. So, I took the leap, and it turned out to be everything I hoped for—and more!

Every day, I wake up with a sense of purpose, knowing that I am not just filling out forms or making phone calls. I am a part of something much bigger: helping a team of dedicated professionals provide care, comfort, and support to those who need it the most. It's more than just a job; it's about making sure that, when life feels overwhelming, the little details don't need to add to the stress. It's about being the calm, the support, the backbone, all while working alongside others who share the same mission—to care for and help heal the community, one small task at a time.

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

Yes, I absolutely love my job. What I enjoy most is the sense of fulfillment that comes with knowing we're part of a bigger picture. The work might seem small to some, but each task I handle directly impacts someone's experience in the healthcare system. Whether it's helping a patient navigate their first appointment or ensuring a doctor has all the information they need, it's the little things that make a big difference.

What stands out the most is the connection with people. Whether it's calming a nervous patient or working alongside a diverse team of healthcare professionals, as a Clerk B I find a deep satisfaction in those moments of collaboration and service. The role allows me to feel like I am doing something important, something that matters.

There's also the thrill of the fast-paced environment—no two days are the same. I might be answering phone calls one minute and then running to fetch important files the next, all while handling unexpected challenges that keep the day interesting. It's a job that keeps me on my toes, but that's exactly what I love about it: the unpredictability and the chance to problem-solve, all while contributing to the smooth operation of a healthcare team.

At the end of the day, knowing I have helped a patient feel seen and heard, or helped the team stay on track, brings a quiet sense of pride.

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

Oh, there have been both best and worst days, but they each come with their own lessons and moments of reflection.

The best days are those when everything just clicks. Maybe it's a particularly smooth shift where the appointments are all running on time, the phones aren't ringing off the hook, and the team feels in sync. On these days, the Clerk B can step back and see the bigger picture: a system that's running efficiently, where patients are getting the care they need without unnecessary delays, and the team is moving like a well-oiled machine. There's something incredibly rewarding about knowing that, through their role, they've helped create that smooth flow. And there are moments, too, when a patient will express gratitude, maybe for helping them with a confusing form or explaining something in a way that made them feel more at ease. Those little thank-yous can make a tough day feel worth it.

On the flip side, the worst days tend to be when things are chaotic, and it feels like nothing is going according to plan. It could be an unexpected influx of patients, a system malfunction, or dealing with an upset patient who's frustrated with a long wait. On those days, it's easy to feel overwhelmed trying to juggle too many things at once, with everyone needing something at the same time. There's also the emotional toll of seeing patients in distress, wishing there were more time to help them.

But even the worst days teach something valuable. They remind the Clerk B of the importance of teamwork and patience. Sometimes, it's about getting through the storm and knowing that tomorrow is another chance to make a difference. After all, it's not always about having perfect days—it's about showing up, doing the best you can, and keeping a positive outlook for the next shift.

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

One thing I wish the public knew is just how much goes on behind the scenes to make sure everything in healthcare runs smoothly. People often see the doctors, nurses, and healthcare providers doing the hands-on work, and while they are essential, the administrative side is just as crucial.

The Clerk B is often the silent orchestrator who makes sure everything is organized, that appointments are scheduled efficiently, and that all records are accurate and up to date. They are the ones ensuring that the right information gets to the right people at the right time.

Another thing the public might not realize is the level of empathy and care that goes into the job. We often deal with patients who are anxious or upset about their health. We're the first person someone might see when they walk into the facility, and our demeanor can set the tone for their entire visit. It's not just about processing paperwork; it's about helping people feel heard and supported in what can often be a stressful, confusing time.

There's also a lot of behind-the-scenes juggling involved—managing multiple tasks at once, from answering calls to organizing records to communicating with different departments, all while ensuring nothing falls through the cracks. It can be mentally and physically demanding, but it's also incredibly rewarding.

So, while the work might seem simple from the outside, it's a lot more complex and essential than many might realize. The Clerk B plays a critical role in the patient's experience and in the overall functioning of the healthcare system. ■



# New NSGEU Staff

Recent staffing changes at NSGEU

Laura previously worked at Lyle Tilley Davidson Chartered Professional Accountants.

**Laura Taylor**  
**Finance & Operation Administrator**

Laura is enjoying working with the NSEGU team, and says the staff are passionate about helping union members. From employee safety, to education, to the general well-being of members at their respective places of employment; the NSGEU team seamlessly combines a variety of skillsets to assist the membership.

Laura enjoys gardening, vacationing at her family cottage in PEI, and playing on a kickball team in the Halifax Sport & Social Club.



Charlene recently joined NSGEU as a Servicing Administrative Assistant after

**Charlene Safire**  
**Servicing Administrative Assistant**

spending 30 years with the Department of Justice, Maintenance Enforcement, and Victims Services Division. Having worked front-line for so many years, she says it's a refreshing change to be behind the scenes while still supporting those we serve.

Outside of work, Charlene has a passion for baking and singing. She's been singing since she was three years old, and one of her most memorable experiences was the incredible opportunity to sing with Céline Dion in Las Vegas in 2003.



Sandra previously worked in Civil Service with Public Prosecutions Service as a Legal Assistant.

**Sandra Weeks**  
**Servicing Administrative Assistant**

Prior to that she worked as a Paralegal at the Department of Justice and was a member of Local 7.

She started working at NSGEU less than a year ago, and says she felt comfortable immediately as everyone was warm and welcoming.

Some of her hobbies and interests include fishing and baseball.



Daniel previously worked as an Information Clerk at Saint Mary's University as a member of Local 179.

**Daniel Mauro**  
Resource Centre  
Representative

Daniel says he enjoys the culture of the union, and that it's been a non-stop learning opportunity since he started six months ago.

In his spare time, he loves being involved in anything sports related and was lucky enough to play NCAA tennis during his college experience in Minnesota, and still plays today.



As a member of Local 7, Marika previously worked for the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, as an Administrative Lead for the SchoolsPlus program.

**Marika Downey**  
Servicing Administrative  
Assistant

She has over 15 years of service working both with NS Government and NSHA and is very excited about her new position with NSGEU.

She looks forward to working with members, after being a civil servant for many years.

Marika is also a Master Cosmetologist and small business owner.



Tina started at NSGEU as a Receptionist/Typist and then quickly moved into the role of Servicing Administrative Assistant.

**Tina DeCoste**  
Servicing Administrative  
Assistant

As a member of Local 7, Tina previously worked as a Secretary 2 at the Department of Justice, followed by Correctional Services Probation in both Halifax and Dartmouth.

Outside of work, Tina enjoys being outdoors and going on walks with her dog and husband of 27 years.



# Around the union in Photos



Left & above: In February, the NSGEU Civil Service Bargaining Unit Negotiating Council (BUNC) met at the NSGEU and unanimously rejected the employer's recent offer. The offer did not adequately address the needs and concerns of NSGEU members and included the removal of job security language.



Left & above: The NSGEU Board of Directors received a presentation from Eileen Alma of the Coady Institute.



Left & above: In February, Steward training took place with NSGEU member and Facilitator Kim Manthorne.



Left & above: The Nova Scotia Federation of Labour's 10th annual International Women's Day Breakfast took place at NSGEU on March 7, 2025.



The IWD breakfast hosted a panel discussion addressing topics related to gender-based violence. The Sister of the Year award was also given out to Local 71C member Donna MacGregor.



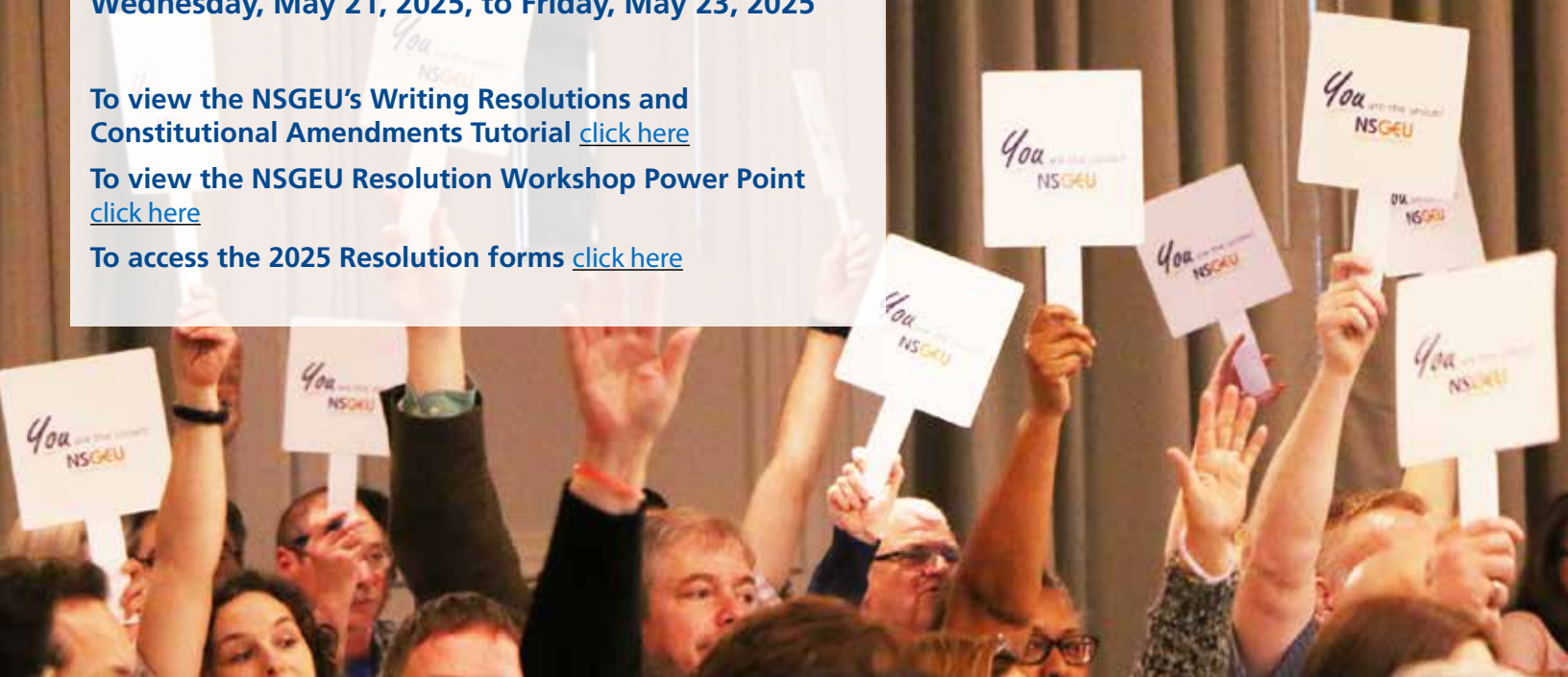
# Triennial Convention

The NSGEU's Triennial Convention will be held from Wednesday, May 21, 2025, to Friday, May 23, 2025

To view the NSGEU's Writing Resolutions and Constitutional Amendments Tutorial [click here](#)

To view the NSGEU Resolution Workshop Power Point [click here](#)

To access the 2025 Resolution forms [click here](#)



Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union  
255 John Savage Avenue, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, B3B 0J3  
902.424.4063 | 1.877.556.7438 | nsgeu.ca | inquiry@nsgeu.ca  
Publication Mail Number 40010698

