

2022 NSGEU CONVENTION

NSGEU 
together again



MEET YOUR NEWLY ELECTED NSGEU PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE COUNCIL!

THE NO-NO STAND

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

SUMMER 2022

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear members,

It is an incredible honour to have been acclaimed as the President of the Nova Scotia Government & General Employees Union this May.

I have been so proud to be involved in this union throughout my career, most recently serving as the 1st Vice President over the past two terms. For those of you I have not yet had the opportunity to meet, I have worked as a Licensing Officer for the Department of Community Services (Local 16), based out of my home community of Weymouth. I have learned the importance of mentorship and connection within the union, and plan to make that a priority over my time as President: I want all our members to feel a sense of belonging and ownership with their union!

A number of significant resolutions were approved at Convention, which will help shape and inform the direction we take over the next three years. These include resolutions to lobby government to begin a truth & reconciliation process for Black Canadians and ensure people have access to Gender Affirming Care; conduct an equity audit of our staff and membership; create mandatory bargaining committee training; and advocate for government to address issues around critical shortages of health care professionals (read more about our key resolutions on page 5).

Another significant resolution that was passed was to allow a second Executive officer to be taken off the job so they may serve the union and its members on a full-time basis. First Vice President Hugh Gillis will be serving the members in this capacity as a trial this term, with the Board reporting back to delegates at our next Convention in 2025 (see note from Hugh).

One thing is clear: we have a lot of work to do.

COVID has taken a toll on all of us, and unfortunately, our struggles are not over. Coming out of the pandemic, people are now grappling with cost-of-living increases and a housing market that is leaving many people behind. One thing is very clear: it is time to put an end to the austerity agendas of past governments. Workers' wages must keep up with rising costs so all Nova Scotians can provide for themselves and their families.

We have hit the ground running since wrapping up Convention just a few weeks ago. We recently received an arbitration award for our Civil Servants, which provides wage increases of 6.5 per cent non-compounded over the length of the three-year deal, as well as other monetary and language improvements.

Significantly, this deal broke a pattern that had already been established for public sector workers this round. Bargaining is also well underway at

a number of other tables, and our goal is to build on the momentum workers have achieved through their hard work over the past two years.

I hope that you will be able to join us at one of your upcoming local meetings or social events this summer and fall, and that you might even decide to take on a role within your local! We need active and involved members to achieve a better future for all Nova Scotians.

I look forward to having the opportunity to meet you this term and hope you won't hesitate to reach out to me with any questions or concerns.

In solidarity,

Sandra Mullen, President NSGEU



Dear members,

I am Hugh Gillis, 1st Vice-President of the NSGEU. I am a Correctional Officer (Local 480) who has been active with the union for many years, serving on our Board of Directors and many committees since 2009.

At NSGEU's most recent Triennial Convention, a resolution was passed to allow for a second full-time executive member to be off the job to assist the President in advancing the objectives of the NSGEU.

During my term, I will be assisting President Mullen and working directly with local executives to strengthen the NSGEU from one end of the province to the other. If you have any questions, like how you can attend your next Local meeting, do not hesitate in reaching out to me.

In solidarity,

Hugh Gillis, 1st Vice-President, NSGEU



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
- 1st Vice President
Hugh Gillis
902-322-3543
- 2nd Vice President
Tammy Gillis
902-759-7530
- 3rd Vice President
Peter Perry
902-471-9623
- Secretary-Treasurer
Darren McPhee
902-449-7778

Contributors

- Holly Fraughton
- Zita Hildebrandt
- Shannon MacIntyre
- David MacKenzie
- Sandra Mullen
- Deedee Slye
- Lucas Wide

Contact NSGEU

902-424-4063
1-877-556-7438
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.

unionsyeah.ca



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

NSGEU



FEATURES

- 4 Convention: Highlights & Resolutions
- 7 Convention: Feedback from delegates
- 10 NSGEU Financial Reports
- 12 Anti-Labour Legislation: Where do we stand?
- 13 Case Aides Grievance Update
- 14 CCPA-NS Report
- 15 Civil Service Contract
- 16 2022 Labour School
- 18 NS Political Landscape
- 19 2022 NUPGE Convention
- 20 Around the Union

NSGEU TWEETS

Mary Shine (@talking_is_good)

"Do something @imHoustonNS! Nova Scotians need action on way too many issues right now which have only gotten worse since your majority took over. If you can't do the job then step down and let someone who can govern do it." - Wes @wesrawding

Sean (@cbcaperats)

@HalifaxPride with my fellow @NSGEU and @NS_Labour members.

Adam Boyd (@BoydMath)

Listen to this nurse: "You know there won't be enough nurses, every day, the question is how short" NS needs 1000 more nurses "The most experienced nurse on the floor was 1 year" "No one knew how to hook up suction" "I cry every night" @NSGEU

Amy Spurway (@AmyLSpurway)

New seats for nursing students is nice. It is not a 'solution' for the current, urgent healthcare crisis. More nursing grads a few years from now won't make the difference between safety and suffering for Nova Scotians TODAY.

Kristen (@yarnbeez)

To ANY Healthcare person seeing this but can't speak because of fear of losing your job. I SEE you...I HEAR you...and THANK YOU for continuing to do your job against the odds. As a parent who has lived MANY hours, weeks in a hospital with a child, you deserve so much better!

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 or connect with us:

facebook.com/NSGEU

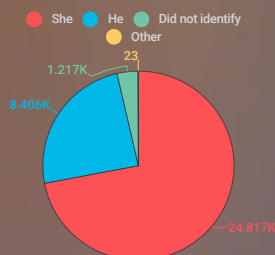
@NSGEU @JMACL3AN

Meet your union!

The membership of the Nova Scotia Government & General Employees Union is incredibly diverse.

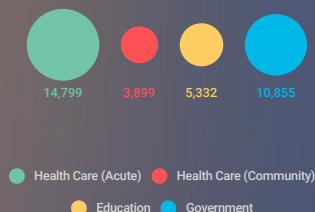
Gender

Approximately 72 per cent of NSGEU's members identify as female. Our union has a very strong & active Women's Issues Committee to represent these members' issues.



Sectors

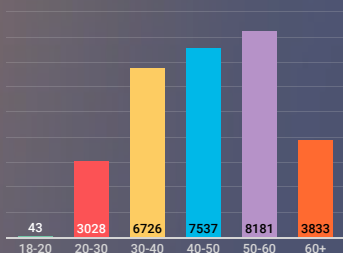
Our members work in a wide range of occupations, which fall under four main categories: Health Care (Acute), Health Care (Community), Government & Education.



Ages



Our data shows that NSGEU members range in age from 18 to 60+ (some people did not disclose their age to us).

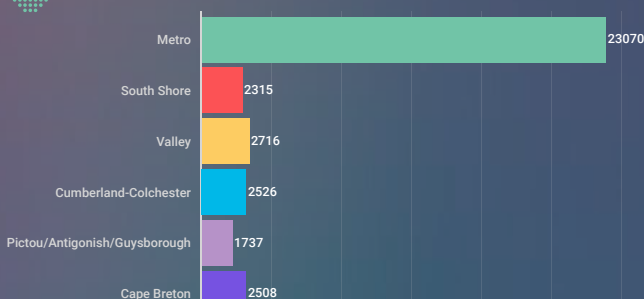


Contracts

More than 62 full-time staff at the NSGEU help negotiate and service 96 separate collective agreements on behalf of our members.

Where can you find us?

NSGEU members live & work in communities throughout the province: Metro HRM, Cumberland-Colchester, Cape Breton, Pictou Antigonish Guysborough, the Valley and South Shore.



Made with Infogram

Convention 2022:

NSGEU members were finally “Together Again” at our 2022 Triennial Convention, hosted at the Westin Halifax from May 12th to 14th. Approximately 316 voting delegates gathered in the ballroom over these three days, discussing matters of immense importance to the union and labour movement, and voting on the leadership and resolutions that will shape the direction of the NSGEU over the next three years. We had an impressive number of new delegates this year, with 171 new voting delegates in attendance (which represents approximately 58% of the total number of voting delegates).

Outgoing President Jason MacLean delivered his final President’s Report to Convention floor, taking delegates through the struggles and triumphs of the past three-year term: “As a union, as individuals, and as a province we endured a global pandemic that forced us to change the way we work, the way we live and the way we function as an organization.”

He had a message of hope and solidarity to share with delegates: “Friends, this is only a snapshot of the work,



successes and challenges we faced together as a union the past three years. Through it all we stood in solidarity with and for each other. We are stronger together. And our fight for fairness will endure and must continue.”



MacLean was also awarded a lifetime membership award and received a standing ovation from delegates after delivering a heartfelt speech thanking his nominators, members, staff and his family for their support throughout his time at the NSGEU.

Shawn Fuller also presented his Executive Director’s report to

delegates: “Let me start by saying, NSGEU members in every single sector stepped forward on the front lines and behind the scenes to keep our vital public services operating during a pandemic the likes of which has never been seen before. Our heroic members earned sincere admiration and gratitude from people across this province. Sometimes the work our members do in delivering world class public services can be taken for granted.”

He explained that while the pandemic kept staff very busy, trying to provide members with the support they needed to stay safe and supported at work, the normal work of the union – bargaining, grievances, and more – did not stop. Despite it all, we accomplished a great deal. He highlighted a number of successful campaigns and reports, as well as rounds of bargaining we completed throughout the term.

Significantly, the Secretary Treasurer & Finance Committee reported that the union is in position of having a significant surplus in 2021, due in large part to the pandemic and restrictions that prevented us from being able to gather. Darren McPhee reported that he is proud of the “fair, strong financial policies” of the union that have allowed us to keep our dues among the lowest in Canada.

“Together Again”

To open Convention, delegates heard an emotional performance by Mi'kmaw author & poet, Rebecca Thomas, who read a commissioned piece, “Jars,” after Nakawe elder & residential school survivor Geri LeBlanc spoke and gave a blessing.

Canadian Labour Congress' Secretary Treasurer, Lily Chang, delivered a rousing keynote address, speaking about what an amazing, exciting time it is for workers in Canada, as the Federal Liberal and NDP rparties have reached a landmark agreement that will see the advancement of many of Labour's key priorities: childcare, Pharmacare, dental care, a just transition, anti-scab legislation, and affordable housing. At a more local level, Chang discussed Nova Scotia's recently released “action for health plan,” saying that while it's a step in the right direction, “the devil is in the details and so far, this plan is light on details.” She also pointed out that NSGEU members have been at forefront of fight against Bill 148, and that our government should stop fighting workers in court and focus on working with them to improve public systems, such as health care. Following the last global pandemic, workers organized to build a better future, and Canada's middle class was created. With the challenges facing workers today, the solution to a better future remains the same as it was 100 years ago: workers must unionize! Coming out of this pandemic, as workers are standing up to employers and governments and demanding better pay and benefits, Chang encouraged us to continue to use our collective power and solidarity to push even harder to organize more workers in more sectors and workplaces: “This is our moment to seize.”

Delegates dealt with a number of key resolutions over the three days.

After some debate – as well as a challenge to the



Chair – they passed a motion to create a Young Workers and Equity Council, as well as to elect Young Worker and Equity representatives to the Board of Directors. Another resolution that would allow for the removal of Board member if they fail to attend two meetings in a 12-month period without cause passed without any debate. They debated and ultimately passed

a resolution that would authorize a second Executive Officer a leave of absence from employment to serve the union on a full-time basis for a trial period, with a report going back to Convention in 2025.



Significantly, they dealt with an extraordinary resolution approved by delegates on the first day of Convention: to protect publicly funded and publicly delivered health care and ensure the Canada Health Act is upheld as the provincial government executes its strategic plan. Many delegates spoke in favour of this resolution, including Dawn Peters (Local 122) who stated: “Our health care

has been slowly eroded over the past 25 years, and make no mistake: its not by accident!" She also warned about the incremental nature of creeping privatization: "You can be sure this new government is coming for us! We know their agenda is privatization, and not just in health care." This resolution was carried unanimously by delegates.

A number of key resolutions relating to equity, diversity and inclusion were also passed:



- A motion to lobby Federal and Provincial governments to begin a truth and reconciliation process aimed at recognition and reconciliation of black Canadians for the injustice of slavery and colonization was passed without any debate;
- A motion was carried unanimously to lobby on behalf of all Nova Scotians to ensure that those who need gender affirming care have access to comprehensive, publicly funded gender affirming care. Delegate Roan Bloomfield (Local 7) spoke strongly in favour of this resolution, reporting that working in the medical examiner's office, they see the results of denying transgender peoples' care;
- Another resolution was carried that will see the union conduct an equity audit within 20 months, working towards staff, stewards, and local officers reflecting the diversity of our membership. Delegate Martha Brown (Local 101) pointed out that in the history of the union, there have only ever been four Black executive officers;
- After much discussion, a resolution that would provide the use of more gender inclusive language in NSGEU materials, collective

agreements and meetings was referred back to the incoming Board of Directors to deal with.

Other notable resolutions that were passed included one on advocating for affordable housing, the creation of an ad-hoc allied health care council and encouraging employers to have functioning labour management committees.

In total, 37 resolutions were passed by delegates to guide the new Executive team and Board of Directors throughout the next three years.

During the final day of NSGEU's Triennial Convention, a new Executive team – consisting of President, 1st, 2nd and 3rd Vice-Presidents, and Secretary-Treasurer – was elected by delegates.

Sandra Mullen, a Licensing Officer with the Department of Community Services in Yarmouth (Local 16), was acclaimed as President.

"Collectively, we have been through a lot over the past few years – as a society and as a union," said President Mullen. "I am honoured to have the opportunity to guide the NSGEU through this next term and help advance the cause of all workers."

Hugh Gillis, a Correctional Officer from Local 480C, was elected as 1st Vice-President; Tammy Gillis, a Deputy Prothonotary with the Department of Justice from Local 2, was elected as 2nd Vice-President; Peter Perry, an Anesthesia Assistant from Local 122, was elected as 3rd Vice-President, and Darren McPhee, a Community Care Worker for the Department of Community Services, was acclaimed as Secretary-Treasurer. ♡



Convention Delegate Feedback

"I enjoyed the convention and am always amazed with how well organized it is and even more so with the fact that we get so much work done. I really enjoyed that there was not a buffet or food snacks at the breaks. In the past I tend to overeat and not have much choice about what I eat and feel uncomfortable throughout the day. Also, I enjoyed that you could sample different places to eat and get a little walk in in the meantime. It worked really well and I am sure minimized the food waste. I liked that we did not have giant binders to manage. I love being at the Westin. I also enjoyed the entertainment portion, it was highly entertaining and a real luxury. I have no complaints."

Dawn Peters, Local 122

"Convention was exhilarating! Amazing to all come together and collaborate to set the vision of the NSGEU. Now more than ever, we need to become involved in our unions and fight for our rights!"

Leah Day, Local 1246

"Convention was Incredible experience for me! It was a privilege to represent local 104.

As a voting delegate I was able to help shape the direction of the union for the next 3 years, elect the executive that will lead us, and be a part of a membership that not only looks after its own but actively seeks improvements for all."

Vanessa MacKinnon Beaton, Local 104



Robert Tupper speaking at the 2016 Convention

Hi to all!

"I am writing to tell you all that my last day of government employment was on August 31, 2021! I do miss the NSGEU! I always love to volunteer in many events and meetings! I surely miss all of you in various meetings. I take that I will miss this NSGEU Convention 2022.

I like to do volunteer workshop to teach on how to deal with Deaf and others.

Sadly, I did not get any fun for my retirement!

I encourage all Local and members to work together, be good team and strong voice and fight in your right at work and meetings! Please you all think of me! I miss a lot of you!

NSGEU will be in my heart forever! Peace and solidarity!"

Robert Tupper & Blossom



"I am grateful that I got to attend this convention, I enjoyed every minute of it.

I attended the meet and great, alone, but felt part of a bigger movement. I met each one of the candidates individually, they all took time to interact and inform me of what is important. On so many levels, I learned so much. I wish I was more involved at a younger age.

I put it out there and pass the word to the younger generation to become involved in their Union.

Thank you, for this great opportunity. To all Members: Stay Involved"

Sandra Simons, Local 44 Treasurer, 1st time delegate



"I was a first-time delegate at the Triennial Convention this year and I have to admit it was quite an experience. I would recommend anyone involved in their local to attend at least once for the experience, education and fun."

Tanya Jordan, Local 53 Treasurer



"This being my first convention, I was truly amazed at all the amazing camaraderie going on. People were so giving in sharing their stories and experiences. The connections made with fellow Kin from all over the province was so rewarding! My hope is that everyone at one point may attend."

Moe Gautreau, Local 7

"It was my first time attending and I freaking LOVED it! I would most definitely apply to attend in the future. I didn't know quite what to expect. I knew there were meetings, but it was a lot more than I had expected: so much more fun. I really enjoyed the whole experience and perhaps next time I will not be so shy and might actually make it up to a microphone. I had first time jitters and not knowing exactly just how many locals we do have was super surprising and really looking forward to attending one in the future.

Cheers to all that are responsible for delivering the Convention and I know that it must have been a lot of behind-the-scenes work and organizing and hats off to all those incredible people. Although it was sad to see Jason Maclean leave, He was a remarkable President. But I have strong faith that our current President will do an absolute phenomenal job as well and all of the executive for the NSGEU."

Cheryl McPhee, Local 3 Treasurer



“Convention is always a very powerful experience where you get to vote on the direction the union takes for the next three years.

This year was like therapy- having the opportunity to connect with people after such a socially - barren few years!”

Mary White-Atwater, Local 66

“My experience at the Convention was amazing, it was my first Convention I learned a lot and I met very nice people, we had to vote for the President – Sandra Mullen – Congratulations to her/she, even though was too much to learn but it was nice to be there, the comedy night was awesome, mostly everything was pretty organized and prepared for those days, and hopefully I will be there again in the next Convention.”

Rola Ramadan, Local 7

“Hello, I was a first-time delegate and ran for 3rd Vice President so it was a pretty intense experience for me, but intense in a good way. I learned what resolutions really were and their purpose, I was able to get a bit of a better understanding to what the different committees actually do. It was great to see the range of concurrence, non-concurrence, chair challenge and everything that came with convention. The people were great, I was honestly shocked with the amount of people who had great things to say about running for the executive my first time there. It was a great experience that I am so happy I had, and I can't wait for next time.”

Christa Schnare, Local 267

“I just have to say the whole experience was phenomenal! This is my 3rd convention, 2nd as a delegate. Think this was the best one yet, the comedy night, was just what everyone needed after a long 2 years. I left feeling empowered each convention, think every member should experience this at least once. I have made friendships that I am truly grateful for and everyone makes you feel welcomed and that they knew you forever! On a side note, the impromptu Cape Breton kitchen party was also a highlight. In closing just want to say kudos to the staff that was so instrumental in planning, definitely not an easy feat! Love my union for soo many reasons!!”

Laura MacLean, Local 76



NOVA SCOTIA GOVERNMENT AND GENERAL EMPLOYEES UNION 4
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2021

	2021 Budget \$ Unaudited	2021 Actual \$	2020 Actual \$
REVENUES			
Member dues	17,734,650	18,285,839	17,739,169
Other income (Note 10)	<u>215,000</u>	<u>999,667</u>	<u>591,973</u>
	<u>17,949,650</u>	<u>19,285,506</u>	<u>18,331,142</u>
EXPENSES			
Wages and benefits (Note 8)	<u>7,839,748</u>	<u>7,186,280</u>	<u>7,531,250</u>
Staff travel	<u>382,600</u>	<u>342,960</u>	<u>280,391</u>
Negotiations and servicing			
Arbitrations and grievances	1,843,500	1,811,221	1,964,011
Negotiations	553,000	408,629	192,047
Classification appeals and arbitrations	15,000	15,215	77,290
Organizing	130,500	145,536	45,568
Education	510,000	172,570	260,500
Communications and research	136,000	57,796	106,179
Health, safety and environment	7,500	-	-
Convention	200,000	4,430	-
Leadership symposium	-	-	22,229
Defense fund	<u>576,538</u>	<u>17,199</u>	<u>395,243</u>
	<u>3,972,038</u>	<u>2,632,596</u>	<u>3,063,067</u>
Administrative and financial			
Rebates to locals	360,000	218,592	242,406
Meetings, provincial committees and councils	913,150	438,561	548,398
General and office	1,503,885	1,251,680	1,272,309
Affiliations	1,248,792	1,102,660	1,048,018
Building	905,000	1,060,781	814,879
Amortization	<u>615,500</u>	<u>518,593</u>	<u>544,366</u>
	<u>5,546,327</u>	<u>4,590,867</u>	<u>4,470,376</u>
Presidential			
Wages, benefits and housing	178,937	178,462	202,408
Travel	<u>20,000</u>	<u>3,415</u>	<u>4,376</u>
	<u>198,937</u>	<u>181,877</u>	<u>206,784</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>17,939,650</u>	<u>14,934,580</u>	<u>15,551,868</u>
EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES	<u>10,000</u>	<u>4,350,926</u>	<u>2,779,274</u>

NOVA SCOTIA GOVERNMENT AND GENERAL EMPLOYEES UNION 6
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT DECEMBER 31, 2021

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
ASSETS		
CURRENT		
Cash	3,132,518	1,489,873
Accounts receivable	1,053,312	1,174,719
Prepays	<u>402,198</u>	<u>355,080</u>
	4,588,028	3,019,672
INVESTMENTS (Note 3)	13,966,414	12,248,106
CAPITAL ASSETS (Note 4)	<u>13,456,809</u>	<u>13,623,852</u>
	<u>32,011,251</u>	<u>28,891,630</u>
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	1,075,088	927,624
Current portion of long-term debt	<u>364,292</u>	<u>319,195</u>
	1,439,380	1,246,819
LONG-TERM DEBT (Note 6)	6,883,928	8,053,494
LONG-SERVICE OBLIGATION (Note 7)	1,996,282	1,788,213
POST RETIREMENT BENEFITS OBLIGATION (Note 8)	<u>3,320,229</u>	<u>3,782,598</u>
	<u>13,639,819</u>	<u>14,871,124</u>
MEMBERS' EQUITY		
INVESTED IN CAPITAL ASSETS (Note 9)	6,208,589	5,251,163
UNRESTRICTED	<u>12,162,843</u>	<u>8,769,343</u>
	<u>18,371,432</u>	<u>14,020,506</u>
	<u>32,011,251</u>	<u>28,891,630</u>

COMMITMENTS (Note 11)

Approved by the Board

 President

 Secretary-Treasurer

 bakertilly

Anti-Labour Legislation: Where do we stand?

NSGEU members have been directly impacted by a range of anti-worker legislation that were passed by former Premier Stephen McNeil and his Liberal government between 2012 and 2021.

Specifically, the piece of legislation that impacted the greatest number of public sector workers was Bill 148, which was passed and enacted by McNeil to impose wage patterns and remove a lump-sum retirement benefit known as the long-service award, continues to be tied up in court.

Although current Premier Tim Houston and PC MLAs at the time voted unanimously against the legislation when it was tabled in the Legislature, and subsequently committed to repeal the bill during their 2021 provincial election campaign, they have failed to live up to that promise.

In late May, we received news that the Provincial government failed in its attempt to prove the Constitutionality of Bill 148 in the Nova Scotia Court of Appeal.

Along with the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour and the other unions who are working together to fight this regressive legislation, we issued a joint statement and pointed out the harmful impact Bill 148 has had on public sector workers, including limiting their wage increases and removing a hard-fought retirement benefit from their contracts.

Just a few weeks later, the Nova Scotia Supreme Court ruled another piece of anti-worker legislation, Bill 75 – which directly impacted members of the Nova Scotia Teachers Union (NSTU) – was unconstitutional. Bill 75 was used by McNeil to end collective bargaining with the province's teachers, stripping them of their right to strike and forcing a four-year unnegotiated collective agreement on them. The result was the province's first-ever teacher strike in the history of Nova Scotia, which lasted until the law was proclaimed and teachers were forced back into the classrooms.

The ruling stated: "At best, Bill 75 was an overzealous but misguided attempt at fiscal responsibility. At worst, Bill 75 was punitive or a vengeful attempt to gain some unrelated, collateral benefit related to ongoing negotiations with other public sector unions at the expense of the NSTU."

The finding that the law is unconstitutional is a poor reflection of a Premier and government who took a strange pride in picking fights with teachers, nurses, health care workers, and other public servants.

The combined failure of government to prove the Constitutionality of Bill 148 combined with the ruling that Bill 75 is unconstitutional has forced the PC government to agree to meet with Labour representatives to hopefully find a fair path forward for public sector workers in this province.

We will continue to keep members updated on these important legislative matters. 🇳🇸



Case Aide Grievance Update

The NSGEU has been engaged in a lengthy and complex grievance with the Public Service Commission (PSC) after they abruptly and incorrectly dropped Case Aide hires from at TE 18 to TE 10 classification back in 2019. We know that members who have been impacted by this misclassification have been through a lot. The grievance process has been very difficult, and while everyone had hoped to restore members back to the TE 18 level, there were very significant obstacles to that.

Ultimately, the union reached a negotiated settlement on this issue, which recognizes that members were wrongly classified.

Had we not come to a negotiated settlement and sent the matter on to another body to decide, there was a strong possibility they could have kept these members at a TE10 level, and a further possibility that had they received a new rate, it could have been lower than what was negotiated (TE14). Given that, the settlement was the option that our expert legal counsel strongly recommended.

The settlement has three components:

First, as an interim measure, the PSC has agreed to move the Case Aides to pay band TE 14 from TE 10 as we await the final outcome. This move will be retroactive to October 2020, meaning Case Aides will receive retroactive pay on the difference between the TE 14 rate and the TE 10 rate for that period. The union was also successful in having Case Aides placed at the same step of the TE 14 pay scale that they occupied in the TE 10 scale. This will amount to more retro than

what is set out in the Collective Agreement, which is only one step per year (those employees kept at TE 18 would remain at TE 18 as long as they remain in the job.)

Second, there is a further commitment to conduct a Classification Review of the position between the parties, PSC and NSGEU. If the agreed upon rate is higher than T 14, there will be a further change in rate effective upon completion of the review. In other

words, we created another process by this agreement which may see the role moving higher than TE 14.

Third, if that review does not result in an agreement, we have the opportunity to take this case before the Classification Tribunal. That Tribunal would hear evidence and render a decision on classification, based on the future referral date.

The Case Aide leadership group is being kept

apprised throughout the next steps of this process. This leadership group served as excellent witnesses, conducted stellar research about the role and provided much information. Without them, we would likely not have received an offer at all. In short, Case Aides could not have had better advocates within their group. There was plenty of appetite to take this to the wall for the group; we did and will continue to do so. The settlement allowed us to acquire some gains and not risk a lesser result. 🍷



CCPA-NS Report on Continuing Care

Earlier this year, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives-Nova Scotia (CCPA-NS) released a report entitled, [Putting Continuity in Continuing Care: Reimagining the Role of Immigration in the Recruitment and Retention of Healthcare Workers in Nova Scotia](#).

As we outlined, and as those of you who work in the system know, staffing shortages in Nova Scotia's healthcare care system have become a full-fledged crisis. In particular, the need for continuing care assistants (CCAs) is urgent.

While this report was released before the government's significant wage increase was provided to CCAs, our concerns remain that the Nova Scotia government's recruitment strategies rely too heavily on newcomers to address staff shortages, while leaving current workers without security and facing barriers to settling here including finding housing. Temporary staffing solutions do very little to address long-standing issues of burnout and turnover in the continuing care sector. As is outlined in this report: the right approach has the potential to transform Nova Scotia's continuing care systems for the better.



One of the issues we flag as a concern is that Nova Scotia has the highest proportion of privately-owned and operated long term care facilities in Canada (44% private for-profit). Such privatized models correspond with limited transparency and public oversight and tend to have lower staffing levels, higher numbers of complaints, more transfers to hospitals, and more reliance on outsourced, casual staff. These

characteristics undermine both quality of care and quality of work and thus the sector's capacity to retain CCAs.

We encourage you to read the full report, as well as the [blog post](#) that focused on why public ownership, oversight and adequate funding are crucial components of a quality homecare system.

Look for our 2022 living wage update on September 7th and an online event on September 8th where we will screen a film and have a discussion on why labour standards need modernizing. Also, mark your calendars for November 25th for our gala fundraiser dinner with an online option this year.

Sign up for the CCPA-NS newsletter and stay up to date on our activities: ccpans@policyalternatives.ca. 📧



A New Contract for Civil Servants

In early June, NSGEU Civil Service members received an interest arbitration award that included a wage increase of 6.5 percent over the three-year agreement that covers April 1st, 2021 to March 31st, 2024.

“Nova Scotians are facing rising costs at the pumps, in the grocery stores and nearly everywhere else,” said NSGEU President Sandra Mullen. “Our union members told us the increasing cost of living was squeezing their family budgets. The Union Negotiating Committee made it a priority to seek wage increases to help offset the high costs of inflation.”

Other key elements of the award include a wage pattern of:

- April 1st, 2021 – 1.5%
- April 1st, 2022 – 1.5%
- April 1st, 2023 – 3.0%
- March 31st, 2024 – 0.5%

As well as:

- A vacation improvement;
- Increase in shift and weekend premiums;
- Increase in standby pay;
- Establishing a pay equity committee to undertake a systematic review of pay equity in the clerical bargaining unit;
- Establishing a committee to continue with the implementation of Community Services recommendations related to issues like standby and retention for child welfare social workers;
- and an agreement that the Employer may designate 10 positions job postings per year for diversity hires.

“I am proud of the bargaining committee for their dedication and outstanding work on behalf of our Civil Service members,” said Mullen. “Together, we have achieved a number of important gains including a solid first step in addressing the challenges working people are facing from inflation.”

The Union and the Province met for collective bargaining on five occasions in May 2021 and continued collective bargaining with the assistance of a conciliation officer in September and November of 2021. On November 22nd, 2021, the Nova Scotia Labour Board established an Arbitration Board to settle the remaining terms for the renewal of the collective agreement, pursuant to Section 23(2) of the Civil Service Collective Bargaining Act.

The NSGEU and the Province agreed to mediation in advance of the arbitration. That mediation took place on Sunday, May 8th, and

Monday, May 9th. While the Union and Employer had several productive exchanges, the parties were unable to reach a deal.

The parties proceeded to a binding arbitration Friday, June 3rd, and once again chose to continue to mediation for the first part of the day. It was then that the parties concluded a deal.

A three-person mediation-arbitration panel assisted in the mediation phase. The mediation-arbitration panel consists of an NSGEU-appointed nominee, labour lawyer Paul Cavalluzzo. The employer’s nominee is long-time civil servant Rollie King. The parties subsequently agreed on Susan Ashley as the independent Chair of the Arbitration Board.

Under Section 27 of the Civil Service Act, any agreement reached following the appointment of the arbitrator and in the mediation required that it be issued as an award by the Board.

The Union’s submissions to the arbitration panel made clear the impact inflation was having on members’ salaries. These submissions and the committee’s tenacity helped the union achieve the goal of re-establishing the public sector pattern which was initially set prior to inflation taking hold in 2021.

“These negotiations were difficult, but the Union gives credit to the government for allowing the collective bargaining process to play out as it should, without interference,” said Mullen. “The NSGEU will now have to build on this achievement with tables that expire in 2022 and when Civil Service returns to bargaining.” 🍀



BUNC meeting (Hugh Gillis)

Labour School 2022

Labour School 2022 was quite a success! Not only was it great to see each other again but it was stimulating to take part in group classes and learn together about important things that help us grow as individuals.

Participants took classes in Communications, Advanced Steward, Leadership, and Talking Mobilization. They learned and practiced things like: solving problems at work; having difficult conversations, understanding collective agreement language; being a more effective leader; and more.



Winter, Cape Breton Youth Project

from New Brunswick Union and PEI UPSE joining our ranks.

Labour School had a few plenaries too. The first, a panel discussion, was moderated by Danielle Sampson, Atlantic Regional Director of the Canadian Labour Congress and was a conversation between the leaders of our unions, President Mullen (NSGEU), President Jackson (PEI UPSE), and President Proulx-Daigle (NBU). Participants heard from past-president Jason MacLean about Black Lives Matter and racism in the workplace.

As well, there was a presentation from Winter, from the Youth Project in Cape Breton about the work they do supporting Nova Scotians including the youth trans community and about gender identity and how to make workplaces more inclusive.

We did have quite a few cases of COVID that followed the week and will be working to continue to improve the safety for participants and facilitators during in-person education events.



Much thanks to the Education Officer (and co-facilitator) Lori Smith, and her Administrative Assistant, Sarah Covey who made sure everyone had the information they needed and structure and support to succeed. Thanks as well to all the facilitators: Shawn Johnson, Garnet Estabrooks, Kelly Ritcey, Rick Wiseman, David Brewster, Kim Manthorne, Deedee Slye, and Lori Smith; and to the amazing participants. It was a great week!

For those who have not participated in Labour School, it is a weeklong educational event hosted by the NSGEU each year and is open to members of our National Union who are members of the Maritime affiliates (NSGEU, PEI UPSE, NBU). This year we had participants



We hope you will consider union education in your future and watch your email for notices about upcoming educational opportunities. You can also contact us to find out more about NSGEU education programs: 1-877-556-7438 (toll-free) or inquiry@nsgeu.ca.

We hope to see you soon! 💖



Labour School 2022



Labour School 2022: Leadership Class



Labour School 2022: Communications Class



Labour School 2022: Talking Mobilizing Class



Labour School 2022: Advanced Steward Class

Premier Facing Two New Opposition Leaders in Emergency Summer Legislative Session

It was expected that the Nova Scotia House of Assembly would next sit sometime this Fall, with the opposition parties led by their respective new leaders. The Liberal official opposition is now led by MLA for Yarmouth, Zach Churchill. Churchill served as both Education and Health and Wellness Minister in the McNeil/Rankin government. He was first elected in 2009 and won the leadership with 65% of the vote.

The NDP is now led by Claudia Chender, MLA for Dartmouth South. Chender ran for NDP leadership unopposed, she was confirmed as the new leader by vote at the NDP convention at the end June. Chender was first elected to the House of Assembly in 2017 and re-elected in 2021.

With crises mounting, it was a surprise to many Nova Scotians when the Premier requested the Speaker to reconvene the Legislature to deal with the political crisis of the MLA Remuneration Review Panel recommendations of an increase of the basic MLA salary.

“When inflation is at a 40-year high, gas prices are at historic levels and many hard-working Nova Scotians are struggling to make ends meet, it is not the time to increase the pay of MLAs,” said Premier Houston. “As soon as I learned about the proposed raise, I took immediate action to stop it.”

While the Premier acted with urgency to nip what he saw as a looming political crisis in the bud, the opposition parties and groups from across Nova Scotia were quick to pounce on the opening to ensure that health care, affordability and environmental issues would be on the agenda.

This emergency session will likely see government attempt to move their legislation on MLA pay through the process as quickly as possible, however, both opposition parties will try to hold the Houston Conservative government to account on four main topics: the affordability crisis, the housing crisis, the health care crisis, and Nova Scotia Power’s application for a rate increase.

The challenge for the Liberals and its new leader is that Churchill was a high-profile cabinet minister in a

government that pushed many of these areas into the critical situation they are now.

For eight years, Churchill defended the governments’ decisions to make deep cuts to programs and services that people depend on, the attack on unionized workers by legislating wage restraint and clawing back key benefits, while doing nothing to address the need for affordable housing. This will be a tough needle to thread by the Liberal leader.

The NDP and Claudia Chender will challenge the Premier on the current nursing shortages, the over 100,000 people waiting for a family doctor and the dangerous waits for emergency care. Chender previously was the lead on power rates issues for the NDP caucus and will play a central role in protecting the affordability and reliability of power rates for families.

Premier Houston has spent most of the summer rolling out commitments to help improve health care. Most actions have been well received, but the question remains how much impact they will have for people needing help immediately.

It’s been a year since the Tim Houston Conservatives were elected to fix health care. So far, most of the decisions offer little relief to those working on the front line of health care. The NSGEU launched a summer video campaign called “In a Nurses Words”; aimed to shed light on the issues members are facing in Halifax hospitals. The health care system is currently short over 1,000 nurses. This is a problem that impacts anyone trying to get the care they need.

The emergency summer session will set the agenda for the next three years in the lead up to the 2025 Nova Scotia general election. While a political crisis around MLA wages will undoubtedly be put to rest, health care and inflation will certainly continue to dominate the political discourse in Nova Scotia. . 🇳🇸

Our National Union – 2022 NUPGE Convention

First – about the National Union of Public & General Employees (NUPGE), because so many people don't know what NUPGE is.

The NSGEU is one of 11 unions who belong to NUPGE representing primarily public sector workers from across Canada. Our national union is the place we go to see how other unions have experienced challenges, such as: learning about conditions for home support workers in BC or Ontario; or how to fight liquor store privatization or long-term care understaffing. Our national union also brings together people from similar occupations – like health care workers, correctional officers, and home support workers, to discuss common challenges and strategies for workplace improvement. It plays a strong role in ensuring communication happens between our unions across the country so we can continue improving our workplaces and fighting for public services, better income equality, strong pensions, occupational health & safety and more.

About the 2022 NUPGE Convention

NUPGE holds a Convention every three years. It is where elections are held for the new Executive and where resolutions are passed to provide the National Union with its mandate. This June, the NUPGE Convention was held in St. John's, Newfoundland and was hosted by our fellow Atlantic public sector union component, NAPE.

Members of our Board of Directors were able to attend convention and helped to make decisions about the priorities of the National Union. They also supported our past-president, Jason MacLean who was elected NUPGE's new Secretary-Treasurer. Bert Blunden, originally from NAPE, was elected the new NUPGE



Board Member Heather Tucker, Local 1246, with the rest of the NSGEU delegates.

President. There was a wonderful tribute to out-going president Larry Brown who has been a gentle and powerful force at NUPGE for decades.

The Board was also there to see our own long-time union activist and friend, Martha Brown, receive a NUPGE lifetime membership in honour of her service and dedication to NUPGE through the years.

NUPGE Convention 2022 was inspiring and took strong positions on fighting for public services and increased funding for mental health, opposing the policies of austerity, expanding and enhancing efforts for greater diversity, implementing anti-racism measures, addressing the climate crisis, and supporting struggles for Indigenous rights.

We have much work to do together with many challenges ahead. The Convention provided much needed clarity and leadership to help us meet those challenges through the years ahead. 🍷



Jason MacLean, NUPGE Secretary-Treasurer



Martha Brown, NUPGE Life Member



Larry Brown, NUPGE President

Member Profile: Darren MacDonald

This is Darren MacDonald. He is a Police Constable/Detective with the Cape Breton Regional Police Service, and a Steward in Local 1995. We asked him a few questions about being a steward.

How long have you been a Steward?

Six years.

What made you want to become Steward?

Being a Steward in the Union gave me the opportunity to be a voice for other members who may be facing challenges. I had a lot of experience in all different sections of the police service and overcame many personal challenges myself that I thought would give me the experience I need to be an advocate for others and ensure their issues and challenges were given due and fair process.

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

There are all types of issues and no two are the same. Issues could range from grievances under the collective agreement, to workplace challenges between members. No matter the issue, the goal is to resolve it fairly.

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

It is certainly fair to say that workplace discrimination continues to be present in all types of organizations. As steward, the job can sometimes be adversarial, as there is usually a conflict to resolve. However, I have not faced any discrimination because of my role as Steward.

What kind of skills has being a Steward given you?

Being Steward has heightened my ability to resolve conflict, to be empathetic to people and their situations, to liaise with management on a variety of issues, and overall, enhanced my communication skills and knowledge of the value and power of being in a union.

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

I would certainly recommend it. While it is certainly a challenging role, the skills you gain and the pride you feel in helping others outweighs those challenges. ❤️



NOTE: This is the first in a series of steward profiles we will be sharing throughout this term. Please check our Facebook and Twitter accounts to see more!

Welcome to the Union!



WELCOME!

We are pleased to welcome 65 new members who work at **Canadian Blood Services**. We already represent 32 workers who work for CBS as Laboratory Technologists, Technical Specialists, Laboratory Assistants, Field Service Representatives, Trainer, and Laboratory Secretary.

Our new members work in clinical, administrative and technical services related to blood donation, preparation, and transportation/shipping of blood product as Donor Care Associates, Drivers, Shippers, Receivers, Supply Technicians, Event Coordinators, Volunteer Coordinators, Territory Managers, Donor Service Representatives, Program Clerks, Timekeepers, Schedulers, and Administrative Assistants. They work out of offices in Dartmouth (270 John Savage Avenue) and Halifax (7071 Bayer's Road).

We would like to welcome approximately 35 new members who work at the **Phoenix Centre for Youth, the Phoenix Housing Support Program and the Phoenix Youth Shelter**. Phoenix Centre for Youth, Local 152, is a walk-in centre that helps youth in their day-to-day lives. Our new members provide services which are confidential, non-judgmental and include: housing support, advocacy, crisis intervention, counseling, parenting support, referral to community and internal resources, health services, financial advocacy, food, clothing, shower and laundry facilities, computer and phone access.

To all our new members: welcome to the NSGEU community and we look forward to your participation in union events.

Do not hesitate to contact the NSGEU if you have any questions. 🍷

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, much more.

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

Lori Smith, Education & Organizing Officer
902-456-6531 or 1-877-556-7438 or lsmith@nsgeu.ca



Upcoming Regional, Occupational, & Local Officer Workshops & Board Elections

During the summer of 2022 invitations to each applicable event will be sent via email. Please ensure the NSGEU has your current mailing address and email address!

Note: alternates only attend if the Regional/Occupational Councillor cannot attend. Alternates can attend the meeting and vote however, they are unable to run in elections.

REGIONAL & OCCUPATIONAL COUNCIL TRAINING		
Course	Location	Eligibility
September 7, 2022 Regional Council Workshop & Board Elections	Best Western Plus 527 Hwy 10 Bridgewater	Elected Regional Councillors from Valley and South Shore Regions
September 9, 2022 Regional Council Workshop & Board Elections	NSGEU Office 255 John Savage Ave Dartmouth	Elected Regional Councillors from Metro A/B/C and Cumberland/Colchester Regions
September 12, 2022 Regional Council Workshop & Board Elections	Port Hawkesbury Civic Centre 606 Reeves St Port Hawkesbury	Elected Regional Councillors from Cape Breton and Pictou/Antigonish/Guysborough Regions
September 10, 2022 Trade Union Occupational Council Workshop & Board Elections (Public Education, Post-Secondary, Liquor Stores, General)	NSGEU Office 255 John Savage Ave Dartmouth	Elected Occupational Councillors from designated councils
September 14, 2022 Civil Service Occupational Council Workshop & Board Elections (Civil Service)	NSGEU Office 255 John Savage Ave Dartmouth, NS	Elected Occupational Councillors from BUNC
September 15, 2022 Trade Union Occupational Council Workshop & Board Elections (Health Care, Long Term Care, Group Homes, Home Care, Support, Admin Professionals, Nursing)	NSGEU Office 255 John Savage Ave Dartmouth	Elected Occupational Councillors from designated councils
October 3, 4 & 5 First Board Meeting	Membertou Convention Centre	For all elected Board Members.
LOCAL OFFICER TRAINING		
Course	Location	Eligibility
September 16, 2022 Local Officer Workshop (South Shore)—	Best Western Liverpool 63 Queens Place Dr Liverpool	Elected Local Officers, and Regional/Occupational Council Chairs/Secretaries from South Shore Region
September 23, 2022 Local Officer Workshop (Metro A/B/C)	NSGEU Office 255 John Savage Ave Dartmouth	Elected Local Officers, and Regional/Occupational Council Chairs/Secretaries from Metro A/B/C Regions
September 28, 2022 Local Officer Workshop (Valley)	Old Orchard Inn 153 Greenwich Rd South Wolfville	Elected Local Officers, and Regional/Occupational Council Chairs/Secretaries from Valley Region
September 29, 2022 Local Officer Workshop (Colchester/Cumberland & Pictou/Antigonish/Guysborough)	Pictou Wellness Centre 2756 Westville Rd New Glasgow	Elected Local Officers, and Regional/Occupational Council Chairs/Secretaries from C/C & PAG Regions
October 6, 2022 Local Officer Workshop (Cape Breton)	Holiday Inn 300 Esplanade Sydney	Elected Local Officers, and Regional/Occupational Council Chairs/Secretaries from Cape Breton Region

Spring Scholarships, Bursaries & Awards

NSGEU is pleased to provide financial assistance to members in good standing and their dependents who are pursuing higher education. There are bursaries for NSGEU members and a range of scholarships, bursaries, and awards for members' dependents. Visit: <https://bit.ly/1PECxPf> for more info.

NSGEU Member Bursary Awards

The following have been selected by the NSGEU Education Committee and ratified by the NSGEU Board of Directors to receive awards.

- \$1000.00 Meng-Chiao Tsai, Local 100
- \$1000.00 Alexis Cook, Local 63A
- \$1000.00 Jeremy Paruch, Local 470B
- \$1000.00 Kaylie MacKeen, Local 66
- \$1000.00 Megan Milner Award Tanya Pelerine, Local 6
- \$1000.00 Garry Dart, Local 100
- \$1000.00 John Mortimer Award Allison Cascanette, Local 66
- \$1000.00 Chantel Brooks, Local 119
- \$1000.00 Cheryl Morton Award Cora Haggett, Local 101
- \$1000.00 Grace Critchley, Local 100
- \$1000.00 Linda Sirota Award Megan Power, Local 8
- \$1000.00 Adam MacDonald, Local 100

NSGEU Member Dependent Scholarship Awards

The following have been selected by the NSGEU Education Committee and ratified by the NSGEU Board of Directors to receive awards:

- \$1,500.00 Joan Jessome Scholarship: Shen Lareina (Nan Li, Local 55A)
- \$1,000.00 Kayla Smith (Marlene Smith, Local 100)
- \$1000.00 Amy Johnston (Stefanie Johnston, Local 100)
- \$1000.00 Jeff Zhang, (Member: Peilong Zhang, Local 100)
- \$1000.00 Kelsey Allen, (Member: Vanessa Allen, Local 6)



Amy Johnston



Allison Cascanette



Adam MacDonald



Cora Haggett



Grace Critchley



Kayla Smith



Lareina Shen



Tanya Pelerine

Labour Day is Monday, September 5th JOIN THE PARADE!



More details coming soon!



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

