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# 5 The President's -MINUTE UPDATE



Michelle Gawronsky

## At the Bargaining Table

### Smaller Locals that make big impact continue to bargain this spring

Most of our Locals in bargaining this spring are smaller and community-based, including the **Elizabeth Fry Society, Project Neecheewam** and **Macdonald Youth Services**, as well as **Metis, Southeast**, and **Western Manitoba Child and Family Services**.

Some have been at the table for many months, and the union is currently working to hold the incoming government to funding mandates that Bargaining Committees have been counting on.

### A busy month for ratifications

Half a dozen other Locals, some of whom had seen their negotiations put on hold until the Civil Service contract was settled, ratified collective agreements in April, including the **Manitoba Agricultural Services Corp. Adjustors, Manitoba Housing, All Nations Coordinated Response (ANCR), Career Connections** and **Allied Wings**.

### Part-timers ratify first contract

About 30 part-time service coordinators and retail and events staff who work for the **University of Winnipeg Students' Association** ratified their first collective agreement on April 28, 2016.

## Welcome to the May edition!

Here's what's been happening in our union throughout April.

If you have any questions, please get a hold of me through our Resource Centre (204-982-6438 or 1-866-982-6438) or e-mail me at [president@mgeu.ca](mailto:president@mgeu.ca).

## At the Polls 2016

On April 20, 2016, I posted a blog about some of the challenges and opportunities that lay ahead for us as MGEU members with the election of a new government. Here's an excerpt from **Upholding their public service promise must remain a priority for Manitoba's new government:**

*With the election of a majority Progressive Conservative government on April 19, we begin a new relationship with a new government this spring. As always, our commitment to you, and indeed to all Manitobans, is that your union will advocate for the protection and enhancement of public services.*

*The PCs made a significant commitment during the election to keep public services public and to protect those services. And I know MGEU members are going to hold the new government to these promises!*

*As with any election campaign, there are often issues discussed that are of concern, too. For instance, Conservative tax cut promises during the election campaign would mean \$300 million less per year for public services. What will happen to those services?*

*We won't know exactly what direction the new government will take until things unfold in the coming months, and the union will make every effort to secure answers on your behalf. We've already made efforts to engage the new government on a number of these issues and will continue to work with them, through provincial ministries and the Premier's Office, to find common ground and consensus on a path forward.*

*We're looking forward to being a strong voice in the debate about our province's future, and improving public services. As always, we'll be taking our direction from MGEU members as we chart a course and begin this next chapter.*

## In Your Workplace

### Glimpse into the halls of justice

On Sunday, April 17, the Law Courts building opened its doors to thousands of Manitobans for "Law Day." I was honoured to join members who work in our legal system, from Sheriff's Officers to Clerks of the Court, as they helped give the public a glimpse into how our court system keeps the wheels of justice turning.



Jarrett Schmidt, Legal Local 26, President Michelle Gawronsky and Deb Jamerson, Legal Component Director.

### Four-day tour of hospitals and personal care homes in 15 communities

In our continuing efforts to address morale and workplace issues in Health Care Support Services Local 413, I met with members throughout the Interlake-Eastern RHA this month to gain a better understanding of the day-to-day challenges they're facing. I've now requested a formal meeting with management to bring forward issues of concern throughout the region, including lack of job descriptions, mandated shifts, and staff shortages.

### 20th anniversary of home care strike, defining moment for MGEU

April 17 marked the 20th anniversary of the MGEU home care strike, and it was my pleasure to recognize it as a defining moment for our union. In 1996, these workers not only risked their livelihood to save a public system they deeply believed in and valued on behalf of their clients, they also ended up kick-starting a new generation of activism within the union!

## In The News

In the wake of the Provincial election, I spoke to **CBC**, saying "Mr. Pallister has repeatedly said he's going to keep public services public and as members of the largest union in Manitoba, we will definitely be working to hold him to that."

In a **Free Press** letter to the editor recognizing twenty years since the Headingley Riot, I outlined some of the critical challenges our Correctional Officers still face, pointing out that "if we've learned anything from the disastrous events of 1996, it's that it's always a good idea to listen to those who know our Corrections system from the inside-out."

## The Big Picture

It was a day of sunshine and remembrance on April 28 as I walked with members of the MGEU Safety & Health Committee and other labour leaders to honour Manitobans who died from work-related accidents or illnesses this year.

2016's focus was mental health in the workplace, and MGEU members across the province attended events to reaffirm their commitment to safe and healthy workplaces.



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