

With our current Collective Agreement set to expire in December 2020, the 2019-20 academic year will be a crucial time for Unit 1 members as we determine our bargaining priorities and begin to build and organize ourselves for potential labour action.

Our bargaining efforts in 2015 drew out a large number of engaged and active members, and our Ascension Meetings had a regular attendance of over 1,000 Unit 1 members. I'm proud to have served on that Bargaining Team and to have helped to achieve a CA that saw financial gains for our most precarious members and the structural changes to our healthcare benefits that have made it easier and more affordable for members to seek psychotherapy and other medical resources. In a large part, our success as a Unit at that time resulted from the open, consistent, and clear lines of communication between elected leaders and members.



Since the 2015 bargaining round, we approved another CA but with a depression in the involvement of members with only a few hundred in attendance at the Ascension Meeting—a decline from a 20% participation rate to 5% in only two short years. Just as learning outcomes can be hindered by inappropriate teaching methods, our inability to have made substantial gains in the 2018 bargaining round can be sourced back to inadequate leadership and an inactive membership.

If we hope to make significant achievements in the next CA, we need to begin immediately to foster and encourage member participation and we need a leader, such as myself, who has a long personal history of open communication and collaboration with members and bargaining-related organizing experience within the Local.

If we want a CA with greater protections from harassment, measures that increase your yearly income, and improved provisions for healthcare, then we need to elect leaders who have proven time and again that solidarity is not a slogan or a salutation—it is a commitment to the betterment of our working lives through collective action. Being a leader means knowing how to will the participation of others.

I am the best candidate for the position of Vice Chair Unit 1, and if elected I will follow through on my 6-point plan:

1. Increase member participation through information and labour action training sessions.
2. Facilitate membership-based bargaining proposal discussions.
3. Provide regular updates on organizing activities to Unit 1 members.
4. Propose to amend our Local's bylaws to allow for electronic, absentee voting in elections for Union representatives.
5. Help to draft a set of core bargaining proposals and a strategic strike action plan.
6. Consult with members about the administration's plans to increase graduate enrollment.

We have roughly 6,000 members in Unit 1 but recently fewer than 40 electing our representatives and making decisions. It's time for leadership that gets members involved and gets us ready to win better wages, better benefits, and better working conditions.