

Activities of the REVP North

Collective Bargaining

We are fortunate to have the highest number of bargaining units in the country. As such, our bargaining-related activities represent a major component of our work.

In the Yukon Territory, Skookum Jim Friendship Centre's Emergency After Hours Outreach Services staff has recently unionized with YEU/PSAC and are negotiating their first Collective Agreement. Teegatha Oh'Zheh support workers have recently ratified their first collective agreement. The Yukon Women's Transition Home has successfully negotiated a new collective agreement. The Yukon Government Bargaining Team spent several days at the table with the employer in late February, and again in March and April. As we are writing this

report, the Regional Strategy Coordination Committee is meeting to discuss next steps, as the parties have difficulties finding a common ground. To show our support for our Brothers and Sisters, we traveled

to Whitehorse at the end of April and participated in mobilization activities.

In the Northwest Territories, members

of the City of Yellowknife Municipal Enforcement have just signed a new Collective Agreement beginning of April. The territorial government bargaining team has met on three occasions with the employer (January and March). The UNW

(who holds the bargaining certificate for this unit) reported that some housekeeping items and some non-monetary proposals were signed off; however, there is concern about the possibility of layoffs.

We've had successes and roadblocks in Nunavut, as well. While members from a few bargaining

units have ratified fair collective agreements, we are battling employers at the City of Iqaluit, and at the Arviat Housing Association. Mid-February we traveled to Arviat to help mobilize members, and will potentially travel to Iqaluit for the



same purpose in the near future. We remain confident that the determination and dedication of our members and staff will eventually lead to obtaining fair deals, for the benefit of all members in our Northern communities.



Political Action and Mobilization

The renewed federal and territorial political landscape has kept PSAC North on our toes. We have been monitoring closely and cautiously optimistic the performance of both the Liberal government, and of the NWT 18th Legislative Assembly. Free trade agreements (Trans-Pacific Partnership-TPP, Canada-EU Comprehensive Economic Trade Agreement-CETA) remain one of our major concerns federally,

alongside Treasury Board negotiations and staffing resources needed to implement the ambitious 2016 budget.

We were pleased to see a major shift from the austerity discourse, to a commitment to spending for the improvement of the lives of all Canadians. The federal budget included a range of allocations for the North, including: investments in infrastructure, affordable housing and child care initiatives; increases in Northern Resident Tax Deduction from 10% to 50% by 2017; expansion of Veteran Affairs services to the North; capital investment in northern water systems, with a promise to eliminate all boil-water advisories within 5 years on reserves; investments in Northern adult education, and revamping the Nutrition North program, with \$64.5 million over 5 years and additional \$13.8 million to expand program to all isolated northern communities.

We will be pressing for clearer

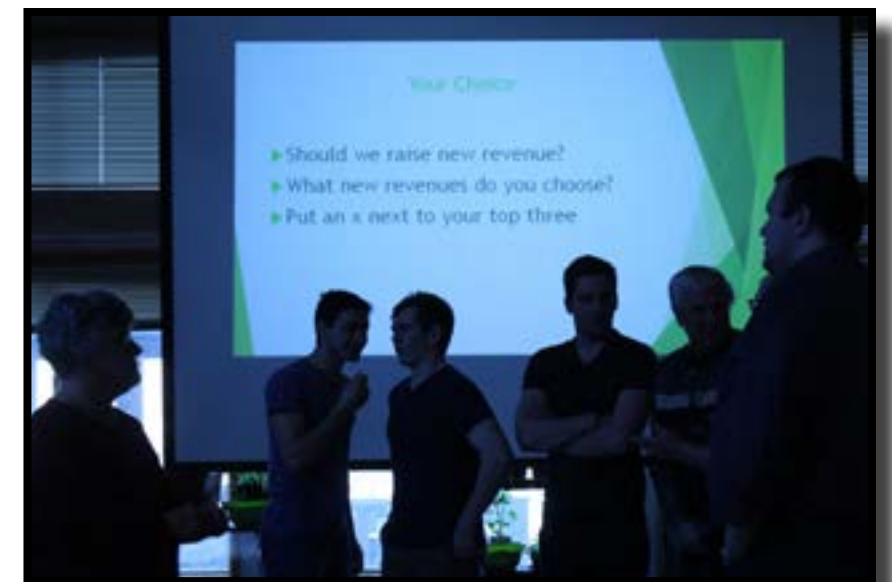
and/or stronger commitments in some areas, such as implementing an accountability framework for Nutrition North (as promised in the election campaign), tying the Northern Residents Tax Deduction to inflation or the CPI (Consumer Price Index), and effectively integrating territorial and federal funding/initiatives with respect to housing, education etc.

Newly elected representatives at the territorial level in the NWT have similarly indicated their commitment to positive change. We hope that voters in the Yukon and Nunavut territories will continue the progressive trend set out federally and territorially in the NWT, as their elections are scheduled in 2016, respectively 2017.

We've been developing positive relationships with labour-friendly MLAs, and not only, by reaching out and meeting in person a few of them to discuss how we could work together for the benefit of our members and communities

throughout the NWT. We are aiming to meet more elected representatives as soon as negotiations with the Government of the NWT are finalized, and such meetings would cease to be perceived as a conflict of interest.

As we approach the release of the territorial budget, in our discussions with the MLAs we have also advocated against austerity measures and pushed for the implementation of a public consultation process,



similar to the one implemented by NL. Our lobby added to the campaign coordinated by our partner Alternatives North, and was a success.

As part of a national lobbying campaign, we are scheduled to meet (together with Area Council presidents, whenever possible) with MPs from the YT, NWT, and NU. We will not only discuss the concerns of our members, but also ask for concrete commitments on issues of importance to northerners (such as the Nutrition North Program, electoral reform, free trade deals etc.).

As part of our efforts to develop

local partnerships and address local socio-economic issues that impact all of us, we have participated in the Anti-Poverty Roundtable (Apr 30-31) organized by the GNWT in

Yellowknife. We took the opportunity there to speak publicly about the key role played by unions in addressing poverty.



We have also attended the NWT Seniors Society Public Briefing (Mar 3). All of us being seniors in the making, we are actively supporting this under-funded, resource-strapped organization that carries such vital work in the NWT, and who may soon have to fight privatization of long term care in the territory. We attempt to raise public awareness on key issues through the local bi-monthly Labour Views column published in the Wednesday edition of the Yellowknifer, and through

engagements with members and the community at large on social media, and during community events. Our political action initiatives will continue to unfold as outlined in the Lobby Strategy we have developed in the beginning of the year.

Membership Engagement

As mentioned above, we engage in ongoing work with the regional committees, via teleconference or in person. Mid-April we organized and attended the North Standing Education Committee meeting in Whitehorse, where we discussed committee roles and responsibilities, education plans for the North etc. We will soon finalize registration processes for Area Council presidents in our region to attend the World Social Forum in Montreal (August 2016) and bring back to the members in the territories insights about the global struggles faced by humanity today, and the potential solutions. Despite a busy travel schedule, we

in person. Mid-April we organized and attended the North Standing Education Committee meeting in Whitehorse, where we discussed committee roles and responsibilities, education plans for the North etc. We will soon finalize registration processes for Area Council presidents in our region to attend the World Social Forum in Montreal (August 2016) and bring back to the members in the territories insights about the global struggles faced by humanity today, and the potential solutions. Despite a busy travel schedule, we were able and happy to attend the UNW Executive meeting (Mar 4), the NEU Executive meeting (April 4) and the UEW Local 30725 AGM (Feb 2) to offer updates on our activities so far in the office, as well as reconnect with Brothers and Sisters across the two territories. The regional offices are currently focusing on mobilizing Treasury Board Locals through several means: connecting with Local Presidents and Local Executive; identifying in collaboration with local presidents best ways to reach the membership (lunches, coffee breaks, in/off the worksite); and subsequently organizing events and conference calls/webinars to provide bargaining information. In the first week of June we will organize a BBQ in the larger centres to encourage and mobilize members for possible future actions. These events will offer numerous opportunities for TB members, such as

networking, receiving updates on TB bargaining via posters/flyers, showing support for the TB Teams. Similarly, these events will give us a chance to meet and/or reconnect with our federal members. We have offered a few educational opportunities to Northern members in the past few months. PSAC Regional Reps delivered four weekend training sessions: Teaching Union Basics (Dawson City), Grievance Handling (Yellowknife), Understanding and Interpreting Your Collective Agreement (Whitehorse), Local Officers Training (Whitehorse). Preparations are underway for the Regional Racially-Visible Conference (Oct 15-16, 2016, Whitehorse), and also for the 2017 North Regional Convention (June 15-17, 2017, Yellowknife).

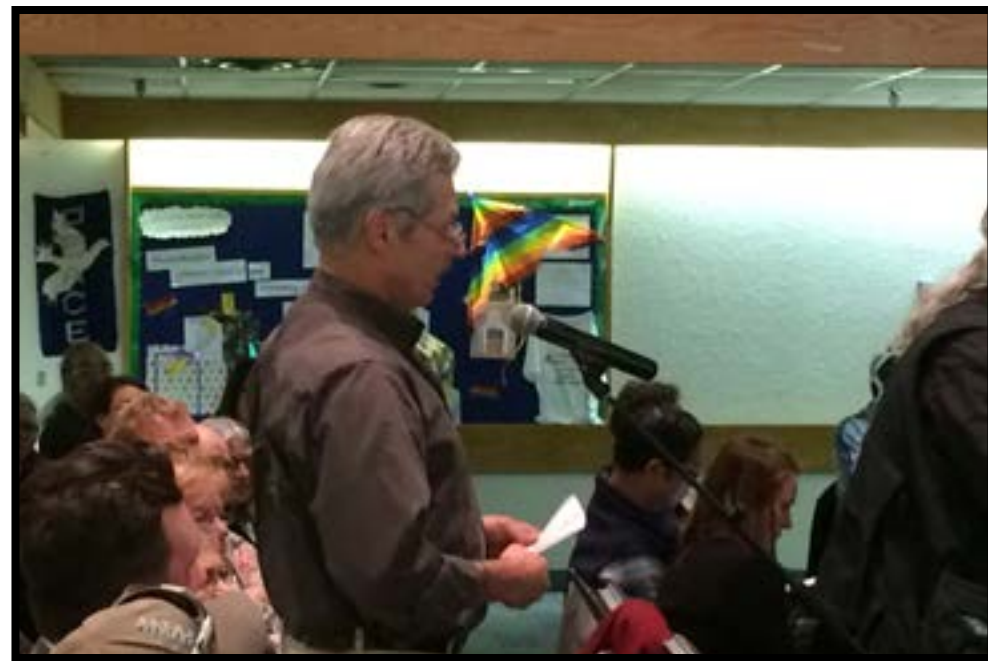
Campaigns

Living Wage: we continue to support this successful Alternatives North initiative that focuses on increasing the number of employers that pay their employees a living wage; we met with campaign coordinators end of Jan. to receive an update and strategize around next steps. *Healthy Apple:* we organized conference calls and invited not only our contacts from participating food banks, but also researchers from Food Bank Canada; the meeting was very informative and helped clarify questions around funding and territorial legislation.

Moose Hide: we continue to distribute moose hides at public events and collect signatures for pledges on our website; we are also planning a mid-year event in collaboration with local non-profit organizations to raise awareness around violence against women and children.

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One last piece of news that we would like to share is that in March PSAC North completed a major office move. The new building is the culmination of 10 years of planning and hard work for UNW. We thank the UNW for our splendid House of Labour.



Itinerary highlights

February– May 2016

Date	Event	Location
Jan 28	Meeting with NWT MLAs Julie Green & Kevin O'Reilly	Yellowknife
Jan 29	RSCC meeting - City of Iqaluit	Yellowknife
Feb 2	UEW Local 30725 AGM	Yellowknife
Feb 4	NWT H&S Committee meeting	Yellowknife
Feb 5	Meeting with NWT MLA Shane Thompson	Yellowknife
Feb 7-16	Mobilization - Arviat Housing Association	Arviat
Feb 21-27	AEC and NBoD meetings	Ottawa
Feb 29	NWT Area Council meeting	Yellowknife
Mar 3	NWT Seniors Society Public Briefing	Yellowknife
Mar 3	Healthy Apple Teleconference (W/Territorial Food Banks)	Yellowknife
Mar 4	Meeting with UNW's FEM	Yellowknife
Mar 5-7	Meeting with UDP 2016 participants	Vancouver
Mar 9	Healthy Apple: Conference Call	Yellowknife
Mar 17	Meeting with NWT Seniors Society	Yellowknife
Mar 24	RSCC meetings (Arviat Housing, City of Iqaluit)	Yellowknife
Mar 30-31	Anti-Poverty Roundtable	Yellowknife
April 4	Meeting with NEU's FEM	Yellowknife
April 11-12	AEC meetings	Ottawa
April 14-15	Regional Council Standing Education Committee meeting	Whitehorse
April 21	Interview with Yukon News	Yellowknife

Itinerary highlights
(continued)
February– May 2016

Date	Event	Location
April 25-28	Bargaining support for Yukon Government members	Whitehorse
April 26	RSCC meeting (Yukon Government)	Yellowknife
May 3	North Regional Council teleconference	Yellowknife
May 4	TB Bargaining Update – pizza lunch	Yellowknife
May 9-10	AEC meetings	Ottawa
May 24	Town hall conference call (mobilization of TB Locals)	Yellowknife

Respectfully submitted,
Jack Bourassa,
REVP North
Public Service Alliance of Canada

