



The Beacon

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The Beacon is an information bulletin for StFXAUT Members

President's Message

Dear Members,

As summer begins, we reflect on highlights observed from the most recent academic year. A significant list of tenure and promotion announcements, numerous research presentations and panels on campus, successful hiring processes, presentations by guest speakers, migration of LTA's to tenure track positions, new discoveries, and innovations in classrooms and labs across campus reflect our Membership. All of these highlights were occurring in a context of effective mobilization of Members to support Coady employees, redevelopment of a policy on sexualized violence, unwarranted pressure on Departmental hiring committees to prioritize candidates early in the hiring process, unilateral decisions on timelines for submission of teaching assignments, departure of senior administration including President Kent MacDonald and Vice President June Webber, and the packing up of offices in Lane Hall for a move to new surroundings.

As we pack away course files and dust-off research papers needing attention, we turn our attention to the next round of negotiations. We have an impressive Negotiation Team to advance Members' issues and priorities, a committed Executive to offer oversight, and an engaged Membership to provide input about issues affecting them. All of us have been asked to participate in this process.

An overriding theme of this year's negotiation is Collegial Governance. Collegial Governance is the governance system by which Universities are both defined and effective. At this year's Annual General Meeting (AGM) our guest speaker was Dr. Julia Wright of Dalhousie University who has published and researched on the topic of Collegial Governance. Dr. Wright provided insight about the importance of Collegial Governance in our work environment and our role within it.

I hope this academic year eases its way into the next without much of a fight!

Mary O.
StFXAUT President

[CAUT POLICY STATEMENT ON GOVERNANCE](#)

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Negotiation of the Collective Agreement by Mary Oxner, StFXAUT President

The [*Fourth Collective Agreement*](#) between the Board of Governors of St. Francis Xavier University and the StFXAUT expires as of June 30, 2019.

What happens when the contract expires?

Prior to its expiration, we provided notice of the intent to engage in collective bargaining with a view to negotiate the next collective agreement. The *Fourth Collective Agreement* will remain in place until negotiations conclude.

Who is responsible to negotiate the Agreement?

In March 2019, the Executive Committee appointed a Negotiation Team which consists of Dr. Charlene Weaving (Faculty-Human Kinetics), Chief Negotiator, Dr. Patricia Cormack (Faculty-Sociology) and Mr. Jamie Powell (Sr. Lab Instructor-Biology); it is the Team's responsibility to negotiate on behalf of all Members. The Executive will provide oversight and direction to the Negotiation Team both directly and through a Negotiation Advisory Committee.

Currently there are all four collective agreements which have to be negotiated by the University's administration. CUPE has completed its negotiation. Both NSGEU's and UNIFOR's negotiations are in progress and StFXAUT's negotiation has recently begun.

What is the process for gathering input from Members?

In preparation for negotiation, we engaged Members in broad consultation in various formats. The purpose of consultation is to allow

for the identification of issues that should be addressed in the negotiation process. Consultation allows Members to have a voice in the process, it allows our Executive committee to consider the various priorities of our Members, and it allows our Negotiation Committee to prepare appropriate proposals for negotiation to address those priorities.

The various forms of consultation included an online survey which invited Members to identify and prioritize issues, meetings with various Member groups for more specific discussions of priorities, discussions with our Executive Committee Members, the Chief Grievance Officers, etc. The Contract and Benefits Committee designed and launched an online survey, collected data and language from various sources including comparators' collective agreements on a large set of issues, and will continue to collect data specific to the requests of our Negotiation Team. Fueled with the information from the surveys and data collection, our Negotiation Team met with our Chief Grievance Officers to better understand issues in the *Collective Agreement* that concern our Grievance Committee and also met with Members of the Executive Committee to identify additional issues voiced by our Members for consideration. Finally, our Negotiation Team organized a series of meetings ("Coffee, Conversations, and Cookies") to receive direct input from our various Member groups.

Based on that extensive consultation process, our Negotiation Team, in conjunction with the Executive Committee, prepared a set of proposals for presentation to the University's administration.

When will negotiations begin?

As of the end of June, the Negotiation Teams have met twice, once to discuss the protocol for negotiations and once to exchange proposals. Negotiations begin in earnest in mid-July.

Avoiding the Train Wreck: Making the Explicit Link between Diversity and Inclusion

by Joanne Tompkins

"Diversity without inclusion usually ends in train wreck" - Robert Wright

At the request of CABSS (Committee for Aboriginal and Black Student Success), the office of the Human Rights and Equity Office invited Robert Wright,¹ MSW, to StFX to lead professional learning on cultural competency and on moving equity forward

¹ Robert Wright, MSW, RSW, is a Social Worker and Sociologist whose 29 year career has spanned the field of education, child welfare, forensic mental health, trauma, sexual violence, and cultural competence. He has always integrated his work delivering direct practice clinical service to clients with teaching and supervising interns, and promoting lasting systemic change through social policy advocacy. He also consults, trains, speaks, and comments on a wide range of issues. His pioneering work with colleagues in cultural competence and conducting cultural assessment has received national attention. (<http://www.robertswright.ca/>)

on our campus. I generally seek these presentations out as my teaching, research, and service rest on these to two topics and I can say, without a doubt, that Mr. Wright's session was one of the best and most pragmatic conversations about diversity and inclusion that I have attended.

As suggested by his opening quotation, Mr. Wright declared that to increase diversity in an organization without a deep understanding of inclusion is to court disaster. Mr. Wright made reference to the recent efforts of the Halifax Fire Department to diversify its workforce by increasing the number of African Nova Scotian and female firefighters on its teams. The organization had a poor understanding of inclusion, and within a very short time complaints arose and the force has faced several class action lawsuits from African Nova Scotian and female firefighters who experienced discrimination within the force. Clearly a train wreck!

It is incumbent that at all levels, but particularly at the most senior, there is an understanding that StFX, like most public institutions in Canada is de facto a hostile place, as its roots are steeped in Eurocentrism. In the early years of the University, it is safe to say that students who attended StFX did so with supports from their families who had enough income to support them. As overall prosperity increased post-WW2, more of the sons and daughters of coal miners, farmers, immigrants, fisherman, teachers, and plant workers were able to have access to university education. There was and currently is a fair share of children of professional classes who came to StFX. Until recently few African Canadians, Indigenous students, immigrant African Nova Scotians, and working class students did not have the means to attend StFX. Faculty and staff were generally a reflection of the student body. The demographics at StFX are changing and the campus is more diverse in terms of race, sex, ethnicity, first language spoken, citizenship, age, income, sexual orientation, able-bodiedness, and gender identity, etc. So while we have increased the diversity of the students, faculty, and staff on our campus, we know from forums on diversity at X that many groups of people do not yet feel 'included', and experience levels of discrimination and exclusion.

Our challenge lies in the fact that StFX is embarking on diversity without a deep and broad understanding of what inclusion is and what it means to an organization. Too frequently we have been reacting to 'train wrecks', rather than having the foresight and understanding to prevent them from occurring. Inclusion is about feeling a sense of belonging and significance. There are groups of students, some of them the second and third generation of X grads in their families, who feel very connected to the culture of StFX and feel an immediate sense of belonging. In fact, the University was really designed with them in mind. However there are other groups of students, as I have mentioned above, who aren't interested in having to change their identity to fit into the dominant norms and Eurocentric attitudes and practices that still exist on campus. These students, staff, and faculty are pushing StFX to become more inclusive to catch up with the diversity that is, and has been for a while, a part of the campus.

If StFX is to become more inclusive, then it has to recognize at the level of the organization and environment it is still largely a hostile place, as was/is the Halifax

Fire Department to African Nova Scotians and female fire fighters. Hoping environments that have historically been hostile and exclusionary will turn into inclusive spaces without doing the rethinking and restructuring that inclusion demands is foolhardy. When, as an institution, we start to move forward without spending hours of time being defensive, apologizing, feeling hurt, or mopping up after missteps occur, we will have made a huge cultural shift. We can build a model for faculty, staff and student learning about inclusion at StFX. We can learn to identify attitudes, structures, policies, and spaces that are currently hostile or exclusionary to certain groups of people. Those of us in the organization that belong to dominant groups (white, English first language, straight, cisgender, middle class, Settler, Canadian born, able-bodied, male, etc.) can and do learn to listen to our students, faculty, and staff who do not carry the privileges so many of us on campus do. We can learn to look at inclusion from the perspective of those who do not feel included and take the time and energy to listen to tell us about what needs to be done. When we learn how to do that we will have learned what the Ontario Human Rights Commission (2005) calls the Platinum Rule: "Treat others as *they* would like to be treated". We have started to do this in some arenas, some corners of the campus. We need to make it pervasive throughout all sectors of campus life.

Mr. Wright's presentation was not merely theoretical. He provides leadership on diversity and inclusion in the province and throughout the country and he was able to give us some starting points to how we could begin. We could, for example, tweak the reference to the Xaverian 'family', which may ring true for some people on campus, but far from all. Not surprisingly, Mr. Wright borrowed from his social work roots and suggested we liken the community at StFX to a '*blended* family'. In a blended family, people know they are coming from different communities and take the time to welcome each other, learn who each other is, and engage in explicit conversations about what they will all need to do so they can live well together. To date, StFX, like many Canadian Universities, has invited minoritized people to come here and hoped that they will fit in or assimilate into the historical Eurocentric institution we have built. In a blended family model we would exert energy ensuring everyone's needs are met. Given that StFX is a residential University and that most students not only learn here, but live at the University, explicit conversations about how we 'live' together takes on special meaning.

And inclusion has to be understood and steps taken to achieving it at the attitudinal, institutional, and systemic levels. All people in management and leadership positions, which include people in teaching positions, would be required to complete diversity competency courses. All people would be encouraged to understand and employ the language around equity. At every hiring, faculty and staff would be asked "*How do you and will you contribute to the efforts at inclusion and diversity on campus?*" (By the way, just in case you think this Mr. Wright is dreaming in Technicolor, appointees to the judicial bench in Nova Scotia are now asked this very question at interviews).

Mr. Wright's recommendations also included:

- making 'real programs' of invitation to actively seek out members of historically underrepresented groups to apply for positions at the University,
- being transparent about the challenges around inclusion that do exist and naming what those challenges are. This involves understanding that discriminatory events are not a 'one-off event' (*'S/he is just a rotten apple'*), but rather are a part of 'systems of discrimination' [*The apple basket needs redesigning*],
- ensuring the various groups of people leading diversity and inclusion on campus have the necessary understanding of diversity AND inclusion to lead this work,
- acknowledging the extra burden racialized and minoritized faculty and staff face in attempting to provide support and resources to help students, staff, and faculty who face micro-aggressions and other acts of discrimination and violence,
- ensuring that the advisors of historically marginally groups on campus are supported in their efforts to support their students and acknowledging the emotional toll involved in doing this work on a daily basis, and
- ensuring that there are counsellors with explicit training in supporting students, staff, and faculty who experience violence and micro-aggression related to race, social class, sex, gender, etc.

Mr. Wright is a highly talented individual. He has a deep understanding and lived experience of diversity and inclusion. He understands the structure and culture of organizations and how to effect change in them. Importantly, he knows the context of Nova Scotia and specific challenges we face historically and contemporarily as we try to become a more inclusive province. He has a track record of being able to help people in organizations develop the skills, attitudes and competencies they need. He is a terrific educator and communicator, and he demonstrated this in our one-hour session. In short, this guy 'walks the walk' and I am hoping this is his first of many visits to work with us to keep our train on its track.

Joanne Tompkins teaches courses in Sociology of Education, Inclusive Practices, and First Nations Education in the B. Ed. Program and Foundations of Education and Leadership in the M.Ed. program.

Save the Dates!

The StFXAUT is pleased to be one of the Major Sponsors for the
[13th Annual Antigonish International Film Festival](#)

October 25th-26th, 2019

Dr. Teresa MacNeil Profile

by Philip Girvan, StFXAUT Communications Officer

Dr. Teresa MacNeil describes the Antigonish Movement as being “in my blood”. The Extension Department had a tremendous influence in rural Cape Breton while MacNeil was growing up during the 1940s and 1950s, and its ethos has driven her ever since. In an interview with *The Beacon*, MacNeil described getting caught up in it:

The whole philosophy of people trying to do something to better themselves because they had no choice really that was the only show in town: that they do something themselves. So as a young person you just got into all that swing. So I went to kitchen meetings when I was a teenager and that sort of thing. It was part of my belief system.

While an undergraduate at StFX (BSc. 1957), MacNeil was involved with the student co-op and also volunteered with the Extension Department. This experience contributed to Father Michael J. MacKinnon, the then Director of Extension, recommending her for the position of Education Director of the Grand Falls Cooperative Society. While in Newfoundland, MacNeil served in this capacity and other roles, including extension work with the Newfoundland Department of Education, before the StFX Extension Department then hired her to work in the Sydney office.

After a few years in Sydney, MacNeil moved to Madison to pursue graduate studies at the University of Wisconsin (M.S., 1965; Ph.D., 1970). In July 1970, MacNeil arrived in Antigonish, having been recruited several months earlier to lead StFX’s newly established Department of Adult Education.

The Department was unique, but administration had confidence in MacNeil, the team that she had assembled, and the curriculum that they developed. Ten years or so into her Chairship, MacNeil met with John Sears, the then StFX Dean of Arts and her immediate supervisor. MacNeil recalled the conversation: “I thanked him because we made a lot of changes. I thanked him for his help and his answer was, ‘I never understood what you were doing; I just trusted you’. I really, really appreciated that. That was kind of the mood at the time”.



Dr. Teresa MacNeil (right) at The Canadian Biosphere Climate Change Adaptation Forum in Baddeck, Nova Scotia on June 19, 2019; photo credit: Corrine Cash

MacNeil spent twelve years with the Department of Adult Education before succeeding Father George Topshee as Director of the Extension Department in 1982. MacNeil was both the first woman and the first lay Director of Extension. She arrived at a challenging time. Historian Peter Ludlow described Extension at that point as “trapped by its history” as well as “desperate to find ways to serve the community while remaining true to principles” (2018).

MacNeil was intrigued by these challenges. Organization was the underlying principle during Extension’s early days. The creation of credit unions, the formation of labour unions, and the establishment of consumer, producer, housing, and credit cooperatives had made a huge difference in people’s lives. However, by 1982, these institutions had become self-sufficient and did not need, nor particularly want, help from the Extension Department.

Meanwhile, the role of government had expanded. Civil servants had been hired to do much of the work that extension staff and volunteers had done in fisheries, labour, and housing. Topshee had lamented the need to chase government grants, and had suggested that fulfilling the mission would require a multi-million dollar endowment fund. Although certain programs delivered revenue, MacNeil struggled to raise the funds necessary to run the Department.

In the context of the Antigonish Movement, adult education, according to Dodaro and Pluta, “was a combination of study and research aimed at building up the entrepreneurial capacity to foster economic action and the required expertise to administer the institutions that were created” (2012; p.269). Under MacNeil, adult education would no longer just be seen as a tool toward socio-economic development; it was to become the principal objective of the Department:

I wanted to go to Extension because I really believed that that could be a way to have people carefully identify what they were up against, and take measures to systematically overcome those hurdles. Take the adult education model again because that’s what it should be and say, “All right, so I’m having a hell of a time in Guysborough County with the fact that the inshore fishery is just collapsing, let’s say the cod fishery, so how am I going to take what I have, because I have skills as a fisherman, and make something of it. That’s how I saw the Extension Department working.

It was a difficult balancing act: adhering to Extension’s guiding philosophy, which might be summed up by M.M. Coady’s phrase -- making people masters of their own destiny -- while recognizing that rural Nova Scotia still faced significant socioeconomic challenges, certain of which had not existed in the 1920s and 1930s, and certain of which might not necessarily be best addressed by what had worked in the past. As a faculty member herself, MacNeil’s vision involved closer collaboration between extension workers and university faculty. However, that model, for a number of reasons, just never clicked.

This contributed to dissatisfaction among certain Extension employees. At the same time the prominent role that the Extension Department had once played within the University had diminished. Dodaro and Pluta write that “the university increasingly removed itself from the whole process, achieving a virtually complete retrenchment” (2012; p.253). The increasing number of faculty and students recruited from outside the region meant that people were arriving at StFX with little or no idea of the Antigonish Movement. The Department grew increasingly marginalized, and MacNeil resigned from the Directorship in 1993.

MacNeil has not slowed down since retiring from StFX in 1996 and has remained an active volunteer. Working to establish the Bras d'Or Lake UNESCO Biosphere Reserve and supporting its maintenance is one volunteer activity that has occupied a considerable amount of Dr. MacNeil's time. This decade-long plus investment of time and energy began in 2003 with a call out of the blue from Grosvenor Blair, a descendant of Alexander Graham Bell.

Blair was part of a group concerned about the implications of gypsum mining at the head of Baddeck Bay. The Bras d'Or Preservation Society (later the Bras d'Or Preservation Foundation and, finally, the Bras d'Or Preservation Nature Trust) was formed in 1991 and was the first land trust in Nova Scotia to hold conservation easements [1]. In addition to this work, concern over potential oil exploration in the Bras d'Or Lakes prompted the organization to examine the possibility of having the Bras d'Or Lakes designated a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. Blair had heard that MacNeil may be a good person to enlist to move this forward. Initially the group was looking at a relatively small area, but, as they looked more closely at the criteria, it became apparent that it was a much bigger undertaking than they had initially realized. According to UNESCO [2], “[e]ach reserve is intended to fulfil three complementary functions:

1. a conservation function (preserve landscapes, ecosystems, species, and genetic variation),
2. a development function (foster sustainable economic and human development), and
3. a logistic function (support demonstration projects, environmental education and training, and research and monitoring related to local, national, and global issues of conservation and sustainable development). Biosphere reserves contain one or more core areas, which are securely protected sites; a clearly identified buffer zone; and a flexible transition area”.

Partners were enlisted, and many miles were logged as MacNeil recruited members to the steering committee and enlisted the support of the five First Nation communities that live on the lake. In 2011, eight years after MacNeil began her work, UNESCO designated approximately 3,600 square kilometers in the center of Cape Breton as a Biosphere Reserve. This is one of 18 UNESCO Biosphere Reserves situated in Canada. All of the Canadian Biospheres are located on the Traditional lands of Canada's First Nations.

Securing a UNESCO designation has not diminished MacNeil's involvement. Eight years after receiving the designation, a large percentage of the population still doesn't understand what it means. MacNeil described the confusion: "We've had the designation since 2011 which is now 8 years. Still people think it's a protection thing when it's really an education thing. It's about people learning to live in their ecosystem. Learning to live in harmony with nature".

Education is a big piece of the Bras D'Or Lake Biosphere Reserve Association mandate. The Canadian Biosphere Climate Change Adaptation Forum co-hosted with The Bras d'Or Collaborative Environmental Planning Initiative (CEPI) took place in Baddeck on June 19 and Wagmatcook on June 20. As part of their welcome to Un'amaki, Forum participants joined the celebration of National Indigenous Peoples Day on Friday, June 21 in the Great Hall of Cape Breton University.

The Forum was, in MacNeil's words, "geared toward an outcome that will provide publishable guidelines for climate change adaptation for communities". Spokespeople representing Canada's Biosphere Reserves along with traditional and specialized knowledge holders shared examples of successful adaptation to climate change. These are to be published and applied within the Biosphere Reserves and, ideally, in a wide range of communities.

Works Cited:

[1] *Victoria Standard*. January 2, 2019.

[2] <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/phnompenh/natural-sciences/biosphere-reserves/tonle-sap-biosphere-reserve/what-is-a-biosphere-reserve/>

[3] Dodaro, Santo and Pluta, Leonard. *The Big Picture: The Antigonish Movement of Eastern Nova Scotia*. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press. 2012.

[4] Ludlow, Peter. "After Monsignor Coady: The StFX Extension Department 1953-2000". <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lsBhhk38bYw>. Recorded 2018. Last accessed April 29, 2019.

Reminders...

- The Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) offers [Health and Dental Benefits for Retirees](#). To learn more about monthly premiums for residents of Nova Scotia, please [click here](#).
- StFXAUT social media activity is ongoing: follow [@StFXAUT](#) on Twitter and like our [Facebook](#) page, www.facebook.com/StFXAUT, to monitor goings-on.
- The next deadline to submit the [StFXAUT Sponsorship Policy and Application Form](#) is **Tuesday, October 1**. Please note that applications can be submitted any time before this deadline. The StFXAUT invites sponsorship requests from organizations committed to education, labour, social justice, and community development.
- Please remember to send your event notices and campus updates to the StFXAUT list serve to keep all Members informed.

Alumni Shout-out: Dr. Emily Joy Sikazwe by Clare Fawcett



The Beacon regularly features interviews with StFX University Alumni on the topic of their relationships with StFXAUT Members who challenged, inspired, or helped in some way. This issue's interview is with Dr. Emily Joy Sikazwe.

Emily Sikazwe (Coady Dipl. 2004, M.Ad.Ed. 2006, Doctor of Laws (Honoris Causa) 2011) is emphatic: If they meet the academic

requirements, her as yet unborn grandchildren--the first child of her daughter, Kayi Nakazwe (B.A., 2010), and of her son, Yatuta Sikazwe (B.A., 2012)--will attend StFX. Attending StFX, after all, has become a family tradition.

Dr. Sikazwe initially came to StFX to study at the Coady International Institute. As the executive director of Women for Change—Zambia, a national non-governmental organization dedicated to the empowerment of women, she was eager to deepen her understanding of development practice. Receiving a Coady Diploma in Community-Based Development and a Certificate in Advocacy and Networking whetted Dr. Sikazwe's appetite for more education at StFX, so she enrolled in the Master of Adult Education program. With guidance from her supervisor Dr. Alan Quigley, who she remembers as a strict but fair professor, and other members of the Department, notably Drs. Leona English and Jane Dobson, Dr. Sikazwe wrote a thesis on developing women's leadership through mentoring in rural Zambia.

Dr. Sikazwe found her Master's experience academically enriching. She examined in theoretical terms her practical knowledge of the rural Zambian cultural practice of women mentoring women through life events such as puberty, marriage, pregnancy, and young motherhood. This linking of theory and practice added depth to her thinking and enabled her to move forward in her development practice, particularly in her work with women with low or no literacy skills. She also conversed extensively with people from the Coady Institute, such as Mary Coyle, Olga Gladkikh, David Fletcher, Deborah Castle, Colleen Cameron, and Alison Mathie.

Many students in the Master of Adult Education program live in their home communities but, for political reasons, Dr. Sikazwe could not live in Zambia. With help from the United Church of Canada, Development and Peace, and the Coady Institute, she stayed in Antigonish residing at Coady MacNeil while her two young children attended boarding school. On a personal level, this could have been a lonely time for Dr. Sikazwe. She feels herself fortunate to have met Dr. Michael Steinitz and his wife Heidi who welcomed her into their home to enjoy Heidi's superb cooking and a



Yatuta Sikazwe (left) and Dr. Emily Joy Sikazwe (right)

little editorial help with her thesis. The warmth of the Steinitz' family led to a close friendship. In fact, the Steinitz family—Heidi, Michael, daughter Suzanna and grandson David—recently visited Dr. Sikazwe in Zambia.

After graduating in 2006 with her Master of Adult Education, Dr. Sikazwe returned to work with Women for Change—Zambia while regularly traveling to StFX to instruct courses in Gender Training for Policy and Planning, Advocacy for Citizen Engagement and Community Development, and Community Development Leadership by Women. In 2011, Dr. Sikazwe received a Doctor of Laws (Honoris Causa) from StFX in recognition of her tireless advocacy of women's empowerment in Zambia and around the world. She is currently engaged as one of five Commissioners at the Electoral Commission of Zambia.

Dr. Sikazwe's connections to StFX stay strong. Her daughter Kayi Nakazwe received a B.A. in Psychology and Sociology from StFX in 2010. She then completed post-graduate studies in social justice, theology, and community development. Ms. Nakazwe holds a Master in Theological Studies from Wycliffe College at the University of Toronto and is now working in Lusaka as a social welfare officer in the Ministry of Community Development & Social Welfare.

Dr. Sikazwe's son, Yatuta Sikazwe, graduated from StFX with a B.A. in Political Science in 2012 and from the University of Victoria with a M.A. in Political Science. He is employed as a parliamentary liaison officer in the Zambian government's Office of the Vice President.

StFX has earned a place in the hearts of Dr. Sikazwe and her children. In years to come, the campus may well be welcoming future generations of this family.

UNIFOR Local 2107

by Philip Girvan, StFXAUT Communications Officer

The Beacon's Spring 2018 issue profiled CUPE Local 1636, the Union representing StFX Safety and Security Services employees. This issue profiles UNIFOR Local 2107's StFX University bargaining unit.

StFX employees from the largest of the eight bargaining units that comprise UNIFOR Local 2107. The R.K. MacDonald Nursing Home unit, Sodexo Food Services unit, the Motherhouse of the Sisters of St. Martha's (Bethany) unit, the East Coast Credit Union unit, the Greenway Claymore Inn & Conference Centre unit, and the Mira Nursing Home unit in Truro are the others.



Left to right: President of UNIFOR Local 2107 Sylvia Phee, the Class of 2018 co-presidents Rachel LeBlanc and Alex Corrigan, and Barry Purcell, Shop Steward and the Skill Trades Representative for Local 2107

Cleaners are the largest group in the university bargaining unit. Maintenance workers, including carpenters, electricians, painters, and plumbers and other skilled trade workers, compose the rest.

Sylvia Phee, the StFX University Unit Chair, has a long history of union service. Phee assumed Shop Steward duties shortly after joining Custodial Services in August 2001. Following that service, Phee served on various union committees before stepping back for a period of time.

In the spring of 2013, the unit was in the middle of intense collective bargaining. Relationships among on-campus unions and StFX University administration were increasingly tense. The StFXAUT had struck for several weeks. The Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union (NSGEU) Local 88 had come close. Phee recalled that "there was a strike vote ... and in an effort to avoid that we had gone to the table on more time with a conciliator".

Meanwhile, two employees of Bird Construction, the company contracted to build the University's new residence buildings, were seriously injured following a six meter fall from scaffolding. One was the partner of the then Unit Chair. The Chair immediately stepped down which prompted Phee's return to union service.



President of UNIFOR Local 2107 Sylvia Phee (left) and Sheila Sears from SAFE (right)

"It had to be done. Somebody had to step in", Phee explained. "There's a serious responsibility among Union Members that needs to be recognized. It's not one, it's all of us. So, in the event that she couldn't, somebody had to". Phee described it as the unit's "last hurrah hurrah... We had the meeting with the Negotiating Team and their Negotiating Team, and a conciliator as a last ditch effort to try and get a collective agreement, and, at the end of it, we did prevail".

Phee credited the Union with providing the training, knowledge, and confidence that allowed her to assume a leadership role during the middle of intense collective bargaining negotiations:

[The experience] was a little unnerving, there's no question about it. ... I understood exactly what was happening so you would know it's not going to be easy... You're just going to go in and do what you have to do. I've had, over the years, a lot of extensive training with my Union. I've been away on several courses. Had taken a collective bargaining course through UNIFOR.

The most recent collective bargaining agreement ended in October 2018. Since then, there has been a change in administration personnel. Phee describes the current administration as "willing to listen. ... They recognize that we exist. ... We feel more included. We feel that if you do have a concern or an issue, there's certainly an avenue". The decision to grant Custodial Services StFX email addresses was cited as an example. Prior to this Custodial Services staff were, as Phee explained, "somewhat excluded from any functions or things that would come through that email".

Phee described other overtures from administration to “try and change culture within our department, more positively [such as] “lunch and learns ...activities...to bring people together [to] meet, exchange, build relationships, and just create a more positive place”.

Phee noted the province’s recent \$3.95 million dollar contribution to the university’s 2018-2019 annual operating funding, arguing that this will weaken any administration attempt to plead poverty. Phee noted that “going in, the University is not any more in a deficit. I’m not suggesting that they make themselves poor either but you know we all deserve a little piece of the pie”. Despite the cash infusion, Phee expects negotiations will be “tough”.

The increasing number of buildings on campus will impact both custodial and maintenance workers. Phee referenced the 2017-2022 StFX University Strategic Plan, particularly the pillar titled “Stewardship and Sustainability” and questioned whether funding is in place to support the goals outlined in that document and whether staff numbers will increase in sync with the University’s ambitious building plan. An understaffed custodial services team managing the expectations surrounding The Mulroney Institute for Government is, Phee says, “going to be fairly stressful”.

The decision membership will make concerning the Nova Scotia Public Service Superannuation Plan (PSSP) is separate from any new collective bargaining agreement. Phee describes the existing pension plan as “years behind. We’re currently now about 15 base years back”. Electing to move to the PSSP, a registered target benefit pension plan, will require a majority vote from membership.

Phee emphasized the close relationships that custodial services personnel often develop with students particularly those living in residence. In certain instances the custodial staff play the roles of surrogate parents; other times, they’re a shoulder to cry on. Phee said that she and her colleagues “really, really love the students. They do their job for the students. It’s not about the administration. It’s about the students”. They help students with laundry, suggest to sick students that they get themselves to the doctor, share chocolate when a student is down. Phee told *The Beacon* that “it’s kind of nice to have that connection because they move away from home and they're frightened. They're young. They leave. They have no kind of guidance. Everything’s kind of free reign. Where they had a sort of structure. Where there was mom and dad and rules”.

In addition to the work of custodial services, Phee highlighted the good work being done by all UNIFOR members: “We have tradespeople, we have power engineers, and we have rink attendants and grounds transportation so these folks ... the needs are very different across the board. Grounds do a wonderful job. They keep the campus looking very good. They’re excellent. The trades guys are really good guys. They get done what they need to get done”.



Dr. Maria Paz-MacKay (left) and
Priscilla Panchol (right) at the January 2019 WUSC
International Forum in Ottawa

World University Service of Canada (WUSC) by Philip Girvan, StFXAUT Communication Officer

The Winter 2018 issue of *The Beacon* profiled the World University Service of Canada (WUSC), the specific role of the StFX WUSC Society, and WUSC's Student Refugee Program (SRP).

The SRP is a resettlement program that provides refugee students an opportunity to pursue post-secondary studies in Canada. To support the students attending StFX, the University waives tuition, residence, and meal hall fees. A four dollar levy included in student union dues cover books, travel, technology, and accommodation during the summer months. This money is enough to cover costs during the student's first year of study.

Kristen Stephens, the current StFX WUSC Society President, explained the limitations of this funding model to *The Beacon*:

What we can do right now, with our student levy, is fully support a student during their first year and then what can support them their second, third, and fourth varies from year to year. It depends if we get extra donations or anything like that. What we're trying to do is make it so we can support them further than their first year.

A need to secure sustained funding prompted the StFX WUSC Society to recently put forward a referendum question that asked if voters supported doubling the annual levy from 4 to 8 dollars. The question had first been put to StFX Students in 2018 via an outreach survey emailed to all eligible StFX students. Unfortunately, not all students received the message. In some instances it landed in junk email folders; some students didn't bother opening it. Those that did vote, voted overwhelmingly to increase the levy, but there simply weren't enough votes to reach quorum.

The strong support displayed in 2018 prompted the StFX WUSC Society to approach the StFX Students' Union to have the referendum question included on the ballot for their 2019 General Election. The Union agreed, and the referendum passed on Tuesday, January 22.

Priscilla Panchol is a student who will benefit from the increased funding. Panchol is a second year StFX student, originally from South Sudan, who first became familiar with WUSC while a refugee in Kenya. She stressed the competitiveness of the application process: nearly three hundred students applying alongside Panchol, but just twenty were successfully enrolled in the SRP.

Applicants with high grades, who interviewed successfully, and scored at least a seventy five on a Pre-Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) received a second interview. Some time passed between the second interview and learning that her application was successful. Panchol described it:

After the final interview they give us like a duration of about two to two and a half months before they release the exam so you are always waiting in fear. You really don't know if you are going to be selected or not. Then, after some time, they just like post some random names on some billboard. You go check on the billboard. If your name is missing you definitely missed out but if you see your name on the board it normally says "we are happy to announce the successful candidates for WUSC" ... and you are like thank you God.

Once accepted into the SRP, students only learn which University that they will attend a couple of months before being issued their airline tickets. "You just know you're going to Canada, but you don't know where exactly in Canada. Every now and then you just googling all the universities in Canada. You're just trying to find information about them, but you really don't know where you're going," explained Panchol.

Scheduled to arrive in August 2017, Panchol did not get to Antigonish until the fall term was underway. This delay disrupted studies and hampered social integration. Food challenges and adjusting to Nova Scotia winters were among the hurdles. Academically, Panchol struggled with the large class sizes and the speed at which professors spoke. An emphasis on individual learning was also different from what Panchol had been accustomed.

Early challenges notwithstanding, Panchol is adjusting to life in Canada. She spent the summer of 2018 working at Tim Horton's, and this year secured a part time job at the university library. Earnings help with tuition and other expenses. Panchol also remits money to her family in Kenya.

Panchol explained to *The Beacon* that despite the challenges:

I just keep telling myself: you came here for a purpose, and you have to achieve what you want to do. So I just push myself every day to try and to adjust to the system, and trying to know people better like making friends who can help me out, consulting other people who have been here and how they did it. There's also like other, Phario, the Somali student who is here. Sometime I just ask stuff from her, "How did you do this? How did you do that?" and she'll be like, "Do this and do that" and this other like local committee members -- they're also very supportive. They help me a lot. They will take me through the University, through the town, show me places, show me where to get assistance when I need it.

Visit the World University Service Canada [website](#). To learn more about WUSC at X, please visit their Facebook [page](#).

YOUR 2019-2020 StFXAUT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Did you know...

As a **Member of the StFXAUT**,
you are entitled to
CAUT's Affinity Programs?

- ✓ **Hotels** (Alt Hotels and Le Germain)
- ✓ **Airport Parking** (Park 'N Fly)
- ✓ **Car rentals** (Budget and Avis)
- ✓ **Insurance** (home, auto, professional property, and travel with Johnson Insurance)

[Mary Oxner](#), President

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[Robert van den Hoogen](#), Treasurer

[Christie Lomore](#), Co-Chief Grievance Officer

[Ken MacAulay](#), Co-Chief Grievance Officer

[Bill Walters](#), Member at Large

[Chris Frazer](#), Member at Large

[Martin Sastri](#), Member at Large

[Norine Verberg](#), Member at Large

***Dr. Peter McInnis,
We congratulate you on being elected as the
Vice-President of the
Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT)!***



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- ✍ [President's message / Leadership & collegial governance by James Compton](#)
- ✍ [Commentary / Questions about Ontario's newly proposed metrics for universities](#)
- ✍ [Obituary / Victor Catano 1944-2019](#)
- ✍ [Reinventing retirement](#)
- ✍ [Interview / Brenda Austin-Smith](#)
- ✍ [Highlights from CAUT Council](#)
- ✍ [CAUT Council Report \(May 2-5, 2019\)](#)

[CAUT Policy Statement on Academic Freedom](#)

2019 StFXAUT Book Prize Awards by Susan MacKay



Left photo: Dr. Norine Verberg (Sociology), Kenzie MacNeil, and Professor Barry MacKenzie (History, Catholic Studies); right photo: Dr. Rachel Hurst (Women's and Gender Studies) and Hannah Moore

The StFXAUT would like to congratulate the 2019 Book Prize Award recipients Hannah Moore (Bachelor of Arts with First Class Honours with Subsidiary) and Kenzie MacNeil (Bachelor of Arts with Joint Major with Distinction).

Each student was presented with a cash award of \$200, and "Truth and Conviction: Donald Marshall Jr. and the Mi'kmaw Quest for Justice" by StFXAUT Member Dr. Jane MacMillan and "Educated" by Tara Westover.

The StFXAUT Book Prize is awarded at Spring Convocation to two graduating students who demonstrate a commitment to social justice advocacy and community development on campus or in the community.

Congratulations Hannah and Kenzie!
We wish you the very best in your future endeavours!

A Note of Appreciation

*Thank you to **Social Affairs Committee Members** for organizing a well-attended year-end Middle Eastern Feast for StFXAUT Members in Marjorie Desmond Hall on Tuesday, April 9th.*

*Thank you to **StFX Music Department students** Coby Nabuurs and Tanner MacDonald for performing at our year-end social.*

The StFXAUT Supports Campus and Community Members



StFXAUT Co-Chief Grievance Officer Christie Lomore (left) and President Mary Oxner (right) at the "Our Hearts are with Coady Staff" Solidarity Information Picket in support of Members of the Coady International Institute on February 14th.



On behalf of the StFXAUT, President Mary Oxner presents a \$2,000 sponsorship cheque to Members of the Antigonish Affordable Housing Society (left to right): Joanne Tompkins, William Cormier, Pauline MacIntosh, and Monica Lent.



StFXAUT President Mary Oxner presents a sponsorship cheque in the amount of \$3,000 to President Kristen Stephens and former President Matthew Trnkus of the StFX World University Service of Canada (WUSC) Society.



Mike MacDonald, Chair of the Antigonish Emergency Fuel Fund Society, is presented with a StFXAUT donation from President Mary Oxner. The \$1,800 contribution was used to order six loads of wood (\$300/load) for households seeking help with firewood.

KEY DATES

Some of the upcoming deadlines in the [*Fourth Collective Agreement*](#) include:

JUNE:

June 30th:

- Annual deadline to report to the Intellectual Property Creator regarding action taken to protect the Intellectual Property and/or exploit it for commercial gain during the preceding Fiscal Year; (**Article 2.11 Policy with Respect to Copyrightable Works and Intellectual Property:5.8 e**) and to remit 40% of net income earned under arrangement (**Article 2.11 Policy with Respect to Copyrightable Works and Intellectual Property:5.8 f**))

JULY:

July 1st:

- A Faculty member who elects retirement will continue to receive the "Health, Dental, and Emergency Travel Plan" and tuition benefits of full-time Faculty members [**see 1.16.1**] until the **July 1** following their 65th birthday. (**Article 2.5 Retirement from University:1.5.1, 1.5.2**)
- A Librarian who elects retirement under this section only will continue to receive the "Health, Dental, and Emergency Travel Plan" and tuition benefit of full-time Librarians [**see 1.16.1**] until **July 1** following their 65th birthday. (**Article 3.5.1 Retirement Allowance:1.16 and 1.17**)
- Deadline for eligible Laboratory Instructors to advance one step on salary scale (**Article 4.4 Conditions of Employment:3.0 and Article 4.5 Compensation:3.0**)

AUGUST:

August 1st:

- Deadline for Sabbatical Leave applications for Faculty and Librarians. (**Article 2.4.1 Sabbatical Leave:14.2; Article 3.4.1 Sabbatical Leave:8.4**)

SEPTEMBER:

September 1st:

- Deadline for Academic Vice-President and Provost, as Chair of the Rank and Tenure Committee, to send a reminder to members of Faculty that those who are about to complete the prescribed minimum of years in the rank of Assistant Professor or of Associate Professor (**Article 2.1.5 Advancement in Rank:2.0**)
- Deadline for the Academic Vice-President and Provost, as Chair of the Rank and Tenure Committee, to send a reminder to those members of Faculty who are to be reviewed automatically for grant of tenure. (**Article 2.1.6 Academic Tenure:3.0**)
- Deadline for Chairs, Coordinators and University Librarian to forward, their recommendation concerning sabbatical applications (**Article 2.4.1 Sabbatical Leave:14.2.1**)

September 15th:

- Deadline for Chairs and Coordinators to report, in writing, any needs for tenure track replacement or appointment to the Dean. (**Article 2.1.1 Recruitment and Appointment Procedure:2.1 a**))
 - Deadline for University Librarian to report, in writing, staffing needs to the Academic Vice- President and Provost. (**Article 3.1 Recruitment and Appointment Procedure:2.1**)
 - Deadline for Faculty member seeking advancement in rank (including accelerated promotion) to apply, in writing, to the Chair of the Rank and Tenure Committee. (**Article 2.1.5 Advancement in Rank:3.0**)
 - Deadline for Faculty seeking promotion to the rank of Full Professor or candidates who elect to have an external referee to supply the names of a minimum of three possible external referees (**Article 2.2.3.3 Evaluation of Faculty Members Seeking Advancement in Rank:7.2 a**)
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