

**Everyone
needs
support.**

BARGAINING BULLETIN



News from the CAAT-Support negotiating team

College support staff stand strong behind the bargaining team

May 12th blue day was a huge success

Thousands of College support staff across Ontario came to work in their Monday blues to support the bargaining team as they headed back to the table.

“It was truly inspiring,” said bargaining team chair Rod Bemister. “We went back to the table the next day with a real sense of power. Seeing all our members stand together, taking pride in the work we do, was exactly the show of strength we need to get the contract we deserve.”

Blue Monday was the first of many events planned to show our support for the team. The more support we show the greater our strength at the bargaining table. Our work is critical to the success of the colleges and the students. So much of what we do is behind the scenes and goes unnoticed. It’s up to all of us to stand together and



To see photos from Colleges all across Ontario visit www.opseu.org and click on ‘CAAT-S Bargaining.’

show the importance of what we do. The colleges wouldn’t run without us: Everyone needs support.

BARGAINING TEAM CONTACTS

Team members and assigned colleges

Rod Bemister, Chair; Local 561, Seneca College:
George Brown, Georgian, Seneca, Niagara

Marg Rae, Vice-Chair, Local 109, Fanshawe College:
Fanshawe, Mohawk, Conestoga, St. Lawrence

Richard Belleau, Local 731, Confederation College:
Algonquin, Boreal, La Cite, Confederation

Rick Nemisz, Local 353, Durham College: Durham,
Sheridan, Humber

Florry Lang, Local 137, St. Clair College: St. Clair,
Lambton, Sault

Rasho Donchev, Local 559, Centennial College:
Centennial, Fleming, Loyalist

Katherine Hilyer, Local 656, Cambrian College:
Cambrian, Canadore, Northern

Bargaining steaming ahead

Words from the Chair...

As the team headed back to the table last week we expected the employer to table a monetary offer and improve their stand on some important issues. We expected them to present a position that shows they recognize the importance of the work we do in the operation of the colleges and the vital services we provide students. What we

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Got questions?

Contact the bargaining team at:

bargaining@rogers.com

Support staff make the colleges run.

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got fell far below expectations. We still have a number of areas of concern.

The employer wants to create a new category of support staff known as “term specific.” In English this means contract worker. They insist this won’t apply to existing staff, but the question is: What would it really mean for you? It means an erosion of our jobs. What happens when a person retires or leaves their position? The employer could try to replace it with a contract job. We need better job security --not an attempt to take away good jobs.

The employer wants to make changes to our access to personal leave if we unexpectedly need to deal with something such as a sick relative. Right now under Article 12.2 we are entitled to personal leave with pay for extenuating circumstances and the employer can’t “unreasonably deny” your request. If the employer gets its way, you may still be granted your leave, but you can expect to have to put in substantial unpaid overtime to make up for it.

They’re also looking for changes that make it easier to contract out our jobs and delay the grievance process.

The Colleges are crying poor as they always do around bargaining time, but let’s be clear - they are just spinning a line. They had plenty of money to give themselves generous wage increases. (The average wage increase for college presidents was 32.5 per cent over the past three years - some got

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We make the colleges run.

more than 50 per cent.) And instead of planning their finances to create balanced budgets, they’re aggressively creating budget surpluses. Don’t get us wrong - we think balanced budgets are just fine, and running a surplus isn’t a bad thing. BUT how can the Colleges say they don’t have enough money to give us a fair wage increase?

Many of the Colleges pay lip service to us. They talk about the importance of our work and the contribution we make to the college system.

Those are nice words, and they’re definitely true, but we’re not seeing anything at the bargaining table that suggests they mean them.

Faculty are the public face of the college system and the work they do is very important, but make no mistake about it: Everyone needs support.

Anything the students need outside the classroom is provided by us and anything the faculty need inside the classroom is provided by us. We make the colleges run.

College support staff want and deserve to be treated fairly and with respect for our contribution to Ontario’s post-secondary education system. We expect to see that respect at the bargaining table and we won’t accept less.

The team has told the employer we expect them to table a comprehensive monetary and non-monetary package when we return to the table on June 10th. If the package isn’t presented they will limit our options on how to proceed.

College workers are key to Ontario’s economic future

In this year’s budget, the McGuinty government focused on skill-training as key to strengthening and protecting Ontario’s economy.

Ontario’s colleges are at the forefront of providing workers with the skills they need to keep our economy strong.

In a news release on April 9, 2008, Colleges

Ontario president Linda Franklin stated, “college graduates play a vital role in Ontario’s prosperity and will be even more essential as the province faces a serious shortage of skilled workers over the next 20 years.”

There is no question we will play a vital role in Ontario’s prosperity and economic recovery. The

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job of college support workers is critical to the success of all students. The work we do will help our economy thrive and protect us from the kind of outcomes we're hearing about south of the border.

College enrollment has increased by 44 per cent since 1990. All indications are that it is only going up. At the same time the number of

full-time support staff has only gone up 3 per cent. Our work is stretched beyond capacity and the demand on us continues to increase.

As we head into such a critical time for Ontario's colleges we want to make sure the employer recognizes our contribution at the bargaining table.



Blue Monday in Niagara

Bargaining Dates

Your team will be at the table representing you on the following dates:

- April 8, 9
- May 13, 14, 15
- June 10, 11, 12
- June 24, 25, 26
- August 12, 13, 14
- August 27, 28, 29, 30, 31
- Sept. 1 (if necessary)

Upcoming events

Bargaining team tour

Members of the bargaining team will be out to every college over the next few weeks to update members on the state of bargaining and give everyone a chance to ask any questions you may have.

Watch for notification to find out when the meetings will be happening on your campus.

Getting prepared

The key to strong and effective bargaining is to be prepared for all scenarios. To make sure we're ready for anything the employer throws at us we set up a comprehensive training course in Toronto for the weekend of June 21st.

Your local president has identified a number of key volunteers from the college to send to the training. The goal is to ensure we have the knowledge and resources we need to support our bargaining team so they can negotiate a good collective agreement.

For the latest bargaining update, visit:

www.opseu.org



Approved for distribution: Rod Bemister, Chair, CAAT Support bargaining team and Warren (Smockey) Thomas, President, OPSEU