What's NU?

COURAGE TO LEAD . CONFIDENCE TO CHALLENGE . COMMITMENT TO CARE



Health Care Reform: Council of Unions

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President's Notebook

By Janet Hazelton, BScN, RN, MPA

What doesn't kill you.....

There's an adage, everything old is new again. I liken this saying to the situation we now find ourselves in. After months of turmoil, unrest, bitter verbal attacks, all resulting from Bill 1, the Health Authorities Act, government has done an about face.

Back in the summer of 2014, when faced with the prospect of health care restructuring that would change employer jurisdictions and create labour upheaval, the unions sat down to figure out a blueprint that would allow each union to maintain status quo, no changes in representation, while bargaining at a common table for each of the four worker groups – Nursing, Health Care, Administrative Professionals (formerly Clerical) and Support Services. Back in those warmer months that are now an all too distant memory, the four health care unions, NSNU, NSGEU, CUPE and Unifor

developed a bargaining model similar to one used in British Columbia. The four unions felt that we had a workable model that could meet the criteria established by government and the employer. By late September our model was rejected by HANS and government in favour of a legislated process. Enter Bill 1.

Fast forward to today, past unresolved mediation, two rounds of inconclusive arbitration for the NSNU and countless hours of unrest, to a newly minted Council of Unions. Further in this newsletter you will read more about the structure and purpose of the Councils as well as each union's new role.

In order to get to where we are today, the government had to introduce Bill 69 to amend Bill 1. This amendment gave the unions, for all intents and purposes, the same model we had proposed last summer. There are minor differences, things that could have been improved upon last year to make it palatable.

What began with legislation government thought was impenetrable, very quickly unravelled under the critical eye of appointed arbitrator, James Dorsey, an expert in this area of labour law and charter rights. The more Dorsey found fault with the legislation the more difficult it became for government to continue down this road. With a less than month until Bill 1 was set to go into effect, government reached out to the unions, who were already talking about how to fix this fiasco, to make amends.

The unions met from March 5 until March 13 to finalize a constitution and put parameters in place to secure the

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On the Cover: Danny Cavanaugh, CUPE NS President; Lana Payne, Unifor Atlantic Regional Director; Janet Hazelton, NSNU President; Joan Jessome, NSGEU President at the Council of Unions press conference on March 13, 2015.

new structure. The unions then started a communications campaign to educate members about the new reality, asking members to vote on the question of whether they want their union to enter into such an agreement. Our vote ended after six days of active polling with over 95% of those who voted, voting in favour of the new bargaining model.

Before Bill 69 was passed I spoke at Law Amendments in support of the legislation that would now restore some form of normalcy to our day to day life at the NSNU. I do not wish to say that the new normal will not be without its challenges, but there is a commitment from all four unions to make this work.

I wish to thank all of you who sent words of encouragement and support to me and to our Board and Staff. I wish to thank you for your patience as this "journey" took many unexpected and sometimes hairraising turns. Just when we thought we knew what the outcome might look like, we were met with more indecision. That was frustrating and out of our control.

On March 30th when I spoke at Law Amendments, I stated that what doesn't

kill you makes you stronger. Nurses live each and every day by this motto. I can say with firm knowledge that if the unions and members can survive this, we should emerge stronger and more united that ever before. Time will tell.

In Solidarity,

Janet

What is the Nursing Council of Unions?

As of April 1, each of the four unions - NSNU, CUPE, NSGEU and Unifor - will continue to represent their members, but bargain collective agreements jointly within four Councils of Unions: Nursing, Health Care, Administrative Professionals (Clerical) and Support Services.

The agreed-upon structure differs from the bargaining association model previously suggested by the unions in that each Council will be led by one union. This means that the lead union representative will serve as Chief Negotiator and the second union representative will serve as Deputy Chief Negotiator, as follows:

 Nursing negotiations will be led by a Chief Negotiator from NSNU, with

- a Deputy Chief Negotiator from the NSGEU;
- Health Care negotiations will be led by a Chief Negotiator from NSGEU, with a Deputy Chief Negotiator from CUPE:
- Administrative Professionals (formerly known as Clerical) negotiations will be led by a Chief Negotiator from CUPE, with a Deputy Chief Negotiator from the NSGEU;
- Support Services negotiations will be led by a Chief Negotiator from Unifor, with a Deputy Chief Negotiator from the NSGEU.

The other aspect of the Council of Unions that differs from the original Bargaining Association model is that the negotiating committees will be assigned according to

the relative membership size within each unit. In the nursing unit, the NSNU will have 11 seats, the NSGEU will have seven seats and CUPE and Unifor will have one seat each.

For the purposes of bargaining, RNs, LPNs and NPs working in nursing roles will be included in the nursing unit.

The Council of Unions only applies to the acute care sector and only to collective bargaining, essential services bargaining, and arbitration cases that may affect other unions. Everything else remains the same for members of the NSNU. Our long-term care and community care negotiations will be carried out separately by NSNU alone.



Janet Hazelton speaks to the media during the joint press conference on March 13. Also pictured: Danny Cavanaugh, Lana Payne, Joan Jessome and Rick Clarke.

The News Conference

On Friday, March 13th, the four Health Care Unions, NSNU, CUPE, Unifor and NSGEU, joined together for a press conference to announce the agreement on the Council of Unions. Leaders on hand to speak included Janet Hazelton, president of the NSNU, Danny Cavanaugh, president of CUPE NS, Lana Payne, Atlantic Regional Director of Unifor, and Joan Jessome, president of NSGEU. They were also

joined by Rick Clarke, president of the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour.

The four union leaders expressed their satisfaction with the resolution that would allow all health care members to maintain their representation. They each spoke about the importance of collaboration, and the relief of finally having a plan in place that all parties could agree to.

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During the press conference, Janet Hazelton spoke on the value of having all nurses in the same bargaining unit.

"I'm thrilled that all the nurses in this province, Licensed Practical Nurses, Registered Nurses and Nurse Practitioners, will be at the same bargaining table. We will have one collective agreement. I see this as a huge win for the nursing profession. It's another win because everyone gets to stay in their unions."

Although this is good news for all involved, the union leaders also made note of their disappointment that this resolution wasn't reached sooner, with consideration for the time and resources used during the mediation and arbitration processes, as well as for the stress caused

to health care workers throughout the process.

With the negotiation process finally resolved, Janet and the other union leaders explained how the process would now unfold. Full membership votes were necessary in order to ratify the newly proposed constitution. All leaders were confident their members would vote in favour of the Council of Unions approach, as it so closely relates to the original Bargaining Association model that was agreed to in the summer of 2014.

Next Steps

During the week of March 23rd the NSNU held a telephone Town Hall to explain the Council of Unions model to our members, and to answer as many questions as possible about what is in store for Nova Scotian nurses going into the April 1st amalgamation of the district health authorities. We heard from many members who are pleased with the resolution, and who are feeling more confident moving into this new phase now that the unions and government have been able to reach an agreement.

From March 26 – 31 a membership vote was held to ratify the constitution that resulted from the new bargaining structure for the unions. We are happy to report that those who voted were overwhelmingly in favour of adopting the new constitution which will enable us to work with our fellow unions using this structure.

As we move into April we have a lot of work still left to do. We will be entering into Essential Services discussions soon, and we will be hosting a Council of Presidents meeting on April 29th to further explain the changes that our union will be undertaking. Furthermore, as a part of a new Council of Unions, we will have to navigate our way through a new format for bargaining. This is a first for everyone, and it is going to take time to navigate the new dynamic and get back to the business of representing our members' best interests at the bargaining table.

We appreciate the dedication and passion of our members, both as nurses and as members of the NSNU. Your continued confidence in our organization has been appreciated, and has provided a strong foundation for the NSNU and our leadership as we weathered a very difficult year. We are eager to move forward, and invite you all to join us as we begin this new stage with our fellow unions.

Council of Presidents

On April 29th the NSNU will be holding a Council of President's meeting at the Best Western Glengarry in Truro.

During the Council of Presidents, NSNU President Janet Hazelton and the Board of Directors will be on hand to discuss the new Council of Unions, and explain the process that will begin to take place now that Bill 1 and Bill 69, the amendement to Bill 1, have gone into effect.

The Council of Presidents is open to all local presidents or their designate. They will bring information back to their locals, and will be able to discuss the current situation in more detail with NSNU members at local meetings.

If you are a local president or designate and you require reservations to attend the Council of Presidents, please contact Clear.House@nsnu.ca.

NSNU Board of Directors Meetings

Each month the NSNU Board of Directors meets to discuss current issues and business relating to the Nurses' Union. Recent meetings have covered everything from the ongoing health authority amalgamation, to the Home Care consulatative process, the Biennial Convention and more.

Members are reminded that they are able to attend meetings of the Board, and to propose topics for discussion that are of importance to those working on the front lines. If you would like to join the Board for a meeting, we ask that you state your intention to attend at least one month in advance by emailing Clear.House@nsnu. ca.

The next board meeting will take place on April 27th at the NSNU office in Burnside. A complete list of 2015 Board meetings can be viewed on the web calendar at www.nsnu.ca.

Consultation on Competitive Bidding in Home Care Sector

On Wednesday, February 18, 2015, Janet Hazelton and representatives from NSNU, joined representatives from CUPE and the Department of Health and Wellness Continuing Care Branch in a consultation session concerning potential changes to the procurement process for home care and home support contracts in Nova Scotia. The Liberal government has engaged a consultant and procurement expert (Gordon Kyle and Associates) to determine whether Nova Scotia should open up its home care contracts to a competitive bidding process and if it does, what the request for proposals (RFP) should look like.

The NSNU is very concerned about the consequences of introducing private, for-profit players into our home care system. Ontario introduced a similar competitive bidding process in the mid-1990s and as our colleagues at the Ontario Nurses' Association tell us, the policy has been a disaster in that province.

The first round of bidding in Ontario was characterized by gross instability due to contract turnovers. Thousands of patients and care workers were displaced. The standards of care, use of wait lists and other practices now vary greatly by region. Agencies are known to ration care and push providers to complete as many visits as possible in their time allotments in order to reduce costs and remain competitive. There are examples of care being cut off from people recovering from strokes or dealing with conditions as severe as multiple sclerosis and cancer. The Auditor General of Ontario claims the home care sector there is plaqued by an inability to ascertain the quality of services offered by providers.



Nurses in for-profit agencies are often paid by the number of clients seen and so profit comes at expense of spending less time with clients. Home care agencies in Ontario are regularly unable to offer full time jobs because contracts can be discontinued every couple of years. This has led to a lack of capacity in the home care sector. Such a development could be disastrous for the Nova Scotia nursing workforce given that there is already a shortage in the long-term care and acute care sectors where workers can be assured of greater stability with respect to employment, pay and benefits.

We encourage our VON members – local presidents, vice presidents, secretaries, shop stewards and any concerned members – to add your voice to this issue.

Please email the Continuing Care Branch, the Minister of Health and Wellness and your own MLA. Susan Stevens, Director, Policy and Planning, Continuing Care: Susan. Stevens@gov.ns.ca.

The Honourable Leo Glavine, Minister of Health and Wellness and Seniors: LeoGlavineMLA@kingswest.ca.

Find your MLA's email address here:http://nslegislature.ca/index.php/people/addresses/.

The NSNU continues to monitor this issue closely, and is working with your local representatives, the VON and other unions to ensure that the voices of our nurses are heard as this process continues.

A meeting of the Health Care unions and the Nova Scotia Citizens' Health Care Network took place on April 2nd to strategize on this important issue.

Provincial Ebola Preparedness Exercise

By MSVU Co-op Student Julia Chapman

On March 4th, the Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness ran a scenario to test procedures for treating a potential case of Ebola, should one present in Nova Scotia. The exercise was conducted at the IWK, one of the two Nova Scotian hospitals designated to treat an Ebola patient, and Colchester Emergency.

The exercise followed these steps:

- A patient testing positive for Ebola at Colchester Emergency.
- An immediate phone call was made to the Chief Medical Officer at the Department of Health and Wellness.
- The patient was transported by Emergency Health Services (EHS) paramedics to the designated Ebola unit at the IWK.
- The patient was escorted by two security guards with appropriate equipment, and was transferred to the secure unit.
- Once in the safe room, all of the nurses that came in contact with the patient were wearing their Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and a nurse was never left alone with the patient for the purpose of support and security.

NSNU member Mary-Beth Rowe, BN, RN is the Clinical Leader of Development at the IWK, and was one of the participants in this exercise. She said it had taken a lot of preparation before the scenario was live, but felt they had been provided with adequate direction and training in order to successfully complete the exercise.



The IWK Health Centre in Halifax, where a portion of the ebola exercise was carried out

When speaking on our province's Ebola preparedness plan, she said, "The algorithms are in place and everything has been explained thoroughly on the intranet, for example, via videos showing how to put on and take off our PPE."

Mary-Beth found the exercise a helpful tool for determining the strengths and weaknesses in the Ebola preparedness plan.

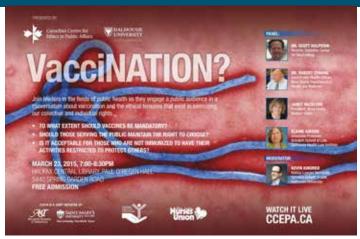
"I think the exercise showed us certain areas we need to address, such as the length of our gowns. Some of the taller nurses, like me, noticed that the gowns weren't long enough. Another area we noticed that needs attention was the staffing ratio per patient. Aside from that, we feel that we are definitely ready in areas of equipment and procedure."

For one patient with Ebola the staffing ratio would include one to three security guards, four to five RN's, one social worker, two infection control practitioners, one director on call, one manager on call, a team leader from the unit the patient is residing in, the Medical Officer of Heath,

EHS, housekeeping and distribution.

Even though the scenario is over, and media attention has moved away from the Ebola crisis in West Africa, Mary-Beth feels Ebola is still considered a priority at the IWK. "Senior advisors are still doing training and educating staff on Ebola; it's consistently spoken about between them. It isn't widely talked about front-line, but that's likely because the media hasn't talked about it or because worry has decreased due to increase of preparation."

Ultimately, Mary-Beth believes the exercise was worthwhile, as it showed healthcare workers what protocols and equipment are required should a case of Ebola present in Nova Scotia. However, as she explains, the exercise has shown that there's more work to be done. The Nova Scotia Nurses' Union and the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions continue to discuss this issue with our provincial and federal governments to ensure the safety of Canadian nurses and other medical staff who may come into contact with Ebola patients.





Janet Hazelton at the VaciNATION panel discussion

VaciNATION Poster

Janet Hazelton Participates in CCEPA VacciNATION Panel

On Monday, March 23rd, NSNU president Janet Hazelton participated in a panel on mandatory vaccinations. The panel, hosted by the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Public Affairs (CCEPA), focused on two areas of discussion: childhood vaccination, and the vaccination of health care workers. The other panelists were Dr. Scott Halperin, Director, Canadian Center for Vaccinology; Dr. Robert Strang, Chief Public Health Officer, Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness; and Elaine Gibson, Associate Professor, Schulich School of Law, Dalhousie Health Law Institute. The discussion was moderated by Kevin Kindred, Halifax Lawyer and instructor at Dalhousie's Schulich School of Law.

The event, held in the Paul O'Regan Hall at the Halifax Central Library, a venue that seats up to 300 people, was packed full of medical and nursing students, members of the Dalhousie community, and members of the general public.

The structure of the discussion allowed for each panelist to make an opening remark on each topic, followed by questions from the audience.

Some of the issues panelists covered included mandatory vaccinations for children, as well as possible incentives for parents to choose vaccination. On the health care side, questions formed discussion around patient safety and the right of health care workers to choose

their own preventative measures.

A common theme from the panel was support for vaccination, and the importance of education and research to continue in that area to improve uptake. Further, Dr. Strang and Dr. Halperin spoke at length about the necessity for better reporting practices in Canada. At present, reporting is sporadic and it is difficult to measure how many Canadians are actually getting vaccinated.

During the discussion Janet remained firm that while the NSNU strongly advocates for all of our members to become vaccinated, we do not support regulations that would force it on nurses. She agreed with Dr. Halperin that in some cases masks would have to be used as an alternative, but she explained that the risks are not equal in all units. She used the example of a nurse who works in a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) as someone who should either be

vaccinated or wear a mask.

The health care portion of the debate largely centred around the influenza vaccine. As the panelists explained, that is because the annual component of the vaccine creates controversy. While nurses who work in special units such as the NICU are required to have certain vaccines, like that for Measles Mumps and Rubella, an annual influenza vaccine is a larger imposition, and that's what creates discord in the medical community.

Overall the discussion was lively and informative. We thank the CCEPA for inviting Janet and the NSNU to participate in the debate and speak on behalf of Nova Scotian nurses on this important issue.

If you were unable to attend the panel and would like to view the discussion, the CCEPA has posted it in its entirety at https://tinyurl.com/k4pz955.



Moderator Kevin Kindred and panelists Elaine Gibson, Dr. Scott Haperin, Janet Hazelton and Dr. Robert Strang

National Nursing Week 2015

With you every step of the way

National Nursing Week will take place from May 11 – 17, 2015. The Nova Scotia Nurses' Union welcomes this opportunity to recognize the important work nurses do each and every day, and take stock of ways we can help improve the quality of work life for our members.

The theme for National Nursing Week 2015 is "With you every step of the way", speaking to the fundamental role nurses play in helping people through their most difficult times, providing support, quality care, a hand to hold, an ear to listen, and a shoulder to lean on. The role of nurses is so important to people who are going through health concerns, and to their families and friends. "With you every step of the way" describes that role beautifully.

During National Nursing Week, the NSNU will be airing a number of commercials to remind the public about the value of nurses in our community, and promoting the importance of nursing as a profession. These ads feature some of your fellow

NSNU members, demonstrating their passion for care. During the week you will also see NSNU president Janet Hazelton participating in media interviews to speak to the importance of supporting our nurses, as well as discussing ongoing nursing issues.

As per usual, we will provide each of our union locals with \$100 to put toward their National Nursing Week celebrations. We look forward to seeing all of the great things you do with your local to celebrate the importance of nursing as a profession, and the tremendous work done by each of our members to provide quality care and support for your patients.

Share your National Nursing Week Story

How does this year's theme, "With you every step of the way," resonate with you and your nursing practice? What does being a "nurse" mean to you? How did your local use the \$100 provided by the NSNU to celebrate National Nursing Week? Let us know! We'll share your stories in the next issue of What's NU?

To share your story with us, please send it to nursesinfo@ nsnu.ca. We look forward to reading it.

As nurses work hard to support their patients, it is equally important that the union and the employer do everything possible to support you in that role by providing the necessary equipment, promoting safe staffing levels, working to improve nurse visibility in your workplaces, and promoting immunizations.



An example of appropriate PPE for caregivers treating Ebola

Equipment

"No nurse should be denied the equipment or training they need to do their jobs safely."

Wise words from a well known friend to Canadian nurses, Rick Mercer, who uttered the phrase in his fantastic "Rick's Rant" for nurses in 2014.

If we have learned anything from the ongoing Ebola crisis in West Africa, it's that it is never too early to prepare hospitals and health care providers with the appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) needed to safely treat highly contagious diseases. In 2014 the NSNU, CFNU and our nurse union counterparts across the country called for the government and employers to provide health care workers with the appropriate PPE required to safely treat Ebola.

Personal Protective Equipment is the first line of defence for front-line workers who put themselves at risk every day, but equipment is about more than just PPE. It's about lifts, showers, bandages, antiseptics, IVs, and having enough of each to meet the needs of all patients who are treated in health care facilities on any given day. It's about making sure nurses have everything they need to do their jobs safely and with the utmost care and respect for their patients.



Attendees at the Safe Staffing Summit

Safe Staffing

In 2013 the NSNU negotiated a workload process that includes the use of an Independent Assessment Committee, which gives nurses a strong voice and input into how best to resolve staffing and other workplace issues. The NSNU has also launched a Clinical Capacity Reporting (CCR) training program for nurses, and has included language in contracts to enforce CCRs.

In January 2014 the NSNU held a Safe Staffing Summit that was attended by more than 200 members. The Summit featured knowledgeable speakers, and

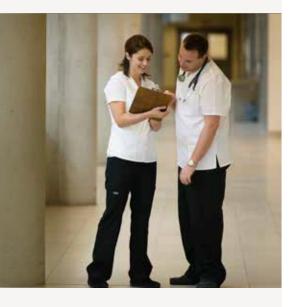
topics relating to CCRs and steps the NSNU and its members must take to improve staffing complements and achieve safe and appropriate work practices.

The NSNU continues to work to enforce safe staffing language in existing contracts in your workplaces, and improve language for future contracts. Members are encouraged to attend CCR training sessions held in their locals to become more confident with reporting methods so we can continue to call on member's own experiences as we work on your behalf.

Identity

Several years ago the NSNU launched a standard white and black uniform for our members. Not just a stylish alternative to the traditional scrubs, the uniforms are designed to make it easier for patients and families to access their care provider by improving the visibility of nurses among other workers in health care environments. It also lends to the professional image of these highly trained individuals, and becomes apparent when there is an absense of white and black uniforms on the floor, reflecting the necessity for safe staffing levels.

Since being adopted by Nova Scotian nurses, the white and black uniform standard has been embraced by several nurse unions across the country, including RNUNL, ONA, PEINU, NBNU, SUN and UNA.





Immunization

The NSNU believes that nurses must have the right to choose whether or not immunization is the right course of action for themselves and for their families. However, we also strongly advocate for nurses to become immunized, especially at a time where so many illnesses are present in Nova Scotia.

The influenza vaccine gives us all an opportunity to stave off the flu each year, and help stem the spread of that illness to other people. Nurses and other health care providers work with the most vulnerable populations, and it is important that they do everything in their power to avoid spreading potentially dangerous illnesses

to those who are not able to rely on the vaccine to keep them safe and healthy. Similarly, the meningococcal vaccination is becoming even more important in Nova Scotia after several cases have been diagnosed around the province, some with tragic results.

Nurses should be as protected as possible while on the job. That includes having the appropriate personal protective equipment on hand, following hand washing best practises and being immunized against common and serious illnesses that they are at risk of being exposed to.



2015 CFNU Biennial Convention Update

The 2015 Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions' Biennial Convention is just a few months away, and the NSNU is hard at work making sure this is a memorable event for all of our delegates. The event, taking place from June 1-5, will feature workshops, plenary sessions, keynote speakers, a banquet and the Ceilidh on the Hill.

Planning this event has been a joint effort between the CFNU and the NSNU, with each group working hard to make sure the Biennium goes off without a hitch.

Here are just a few of the things the NSNU is working on for the Biennium:

- Assisting with workshops and sessions
- Managing NSNU member registration and hotel bookings
- Managing volunteer registration
- Working with talent including the

Barra McNeils, Squid and John Gracie to ensure social events are a memorable Maritime experience

- Managing and updating the e-Portal with Destination Halifax
- Planning the Ceilidh on the Hill
- Working with our host, the World Trade and Convention Centre, to finalize details

With so much work being done by the NSNU and the CFNU to bring you the best Biennium possible, be sure to register soon while there are still tickets available for special events, and space left in workshops.

Out of province delegates and NSNU members who are not being sponsored by the Provincial Union are invited to register at https://nursesunions.ca/node/1449.

NSNU Members & Guests (both

Provincially and Locally sponsored) can contact Clear. House@nsnu.ca for all hotel reservations and other inquiries.

Selecting Your Workshops

We're preparing a number of fascinating and informative sessions for delegates to enjoy during the 2015 Biennium.

Educational sessions for the Biennium will take place on days two and three. While a detailed overview of all of the workshops can be found on the CFNU website, we've highlighted just a few of the fascinating sessions that are available, and the presenters who will be sharing their valuable experiences and insights with our delegates.

With the registration deadline quickly approaching, workshops are beginning to fill up. If you haven't registered yet, be sure to do so before the deadline, May 3, 2015, and make your workshop selections.



Available Workshops

Calling All Emerging Nurse Activists – The Future of Your Union Depends on You! Facilitator: Jaclyn Whalen (RNUNL)

Calling All Experienced Nurse Activists – The Future of Your Union Depends on You!
Facilitator: Maureen Harris (RNUNL)
Facilitator: Vicki Smallman (CLC)

Leading your Team through Change (Back by popular demand)
Facilitator: Jayne Harvey

Professional Responsibility: Making the Link between Your Workplace and Your Standards of Nursing Practice

Facilitators: Chris Axtell (UNA), Jo Anne Shannon (ONA), Carol Reichert (CFNU) & Siobhainn Lewis (ARNNL)

Visit nursesunions.ca for detailed workshop descriptions.



Welcoming International

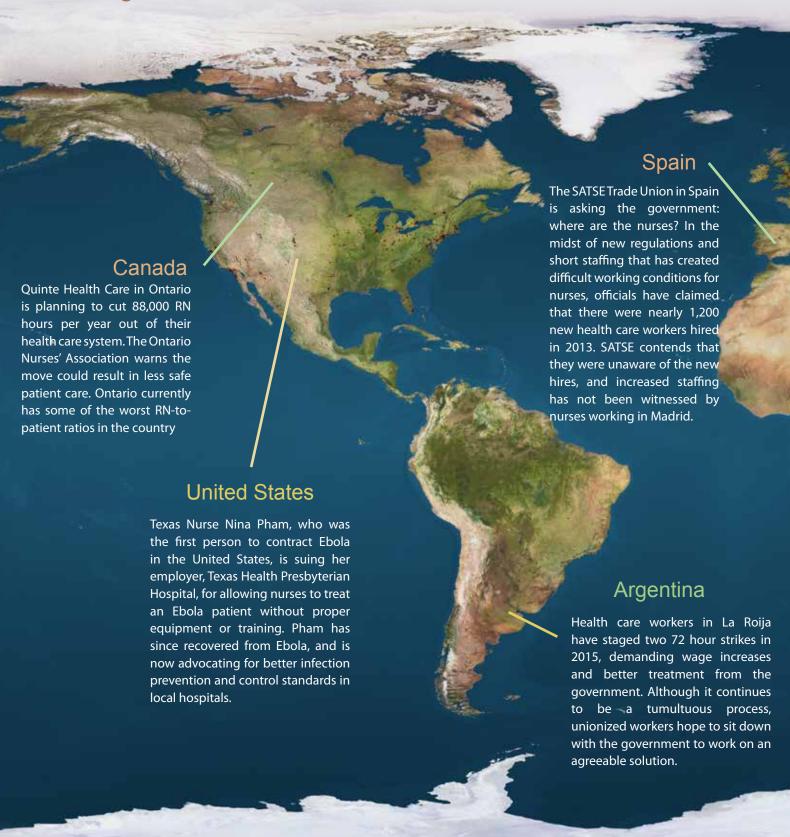
Guests to Halifax

One of the great things about the 2015 CFNU Biennial Convention is the opportunity to meet our nursing partners from around the world. This year's event will feature a "Global Perspectives Session" during the Halifax event, which will be moderated by Ken Zinn (National Nurses United), with panelists from the International Council of Nurses, including Jossel Ebesate (Alliance of Health Workers, Phillipines), Marios Pantzalis (PASONOP, Greece), Solange Aparecida Caetano (Federação Nacional dos Enfermeiros, Brazil).

During this session each of the panelists will have an opportunity to discuss how their nation's experiences relate to the work of Global Nurses United. With many rich and valuable experiences between them, the panelists bring a unique international perspective to the convention.

Global Nurses United

Nursing news from around the world



The CFNU and its member organizations, including the NSNU, support Global Nurses United, which is a solidarity and political action movement among nurse organizations around the world.

Nurses in Australia are fighting a review that is targeting minimum wages and penalty rates. Penalty rates account for some of the compensation nurses receive for shift work specifically during evenings, weekends and public holidays. These rates can Iran account for as much as 30% Nearly 1000 nurses in Tehran of a nurse's salary. attended a rally to protest low wages and difficult working conditions in Iranian hospitals. Iran is currently facing an extreme nursing shortage, which causes hospitals to fall well below international standards for safe staffing. Approximately 40 nurses leave Iran every day in search of better working conditions, including many who immigrate to Canada. South Africa There continues to be a severe shortage of nurses working in South Africa, due in large part to the closures of several nursing colleges in the 1990's. The shortage puts a strain on the public health care system, and also on private hospitals, which have difficulty finding and retaining skilled nurses.

"In 2030 we want to be able to talk about a world that has achieved gender equality. A 50-50 Planet."

- UN Under-Secretary-General and UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka

Commission on the Status of Women

From March 9 - 20, 2015 CFNU President Linda Silas joined thousands of Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) members and hundreds of country representatives at the United Nations Headquarters in New York City for the 59th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW59). The session marked the 20th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration, which is considered the most comprehensive strategy for improving the status of women around the world.

The Beijing Declaration was adopted at the FourthWorld Conference on Women in September 1995. It highlighted 12 critical areas that would need to be addressed to improve the status of women around the world, including poverty; education and training; health; violence; armed conflict; economy; power and decision-making; institutional mechanisms; human rights; media; environment; and the girl child.

Twenty years later, CSW59 focused on determining how well governments around the world have done in enacting the goals set forth in the Beijing Declaration, and presented a number of panels and discussions around the 12 critical areas to demonstrate why more efforts are needed. In advance of the event, UN Women received national reviews from 167 nations on their successes and failures in implementing the Beijing Declaration, including a comprehensive review from Canada.

In a statement released on their website, UN Women put the results of the Beijing Declaration in perspective: "While 189 countries endorsed the Platform for Action, 20 years later, no country has achieved gender equality. At the current pace of change, it will take 81 years to achieve gender parity in economic participation, for example, and 50 years to reach parity in parliamentary representation."

Not just looking back, the CSW59 also focused on plans for moving forward. "Governments pledged to take concrete action and efforts through six specific strategies: do more to strengthen implementation of laws; bolster institutions vital to women's empowerment; transform discriminatory norms and stereotypes; close resource gaps; boost accountability; and enhance capacities and data to track progress."

The ultimate goal of CSW59 is to have complete gender equality worldwide by 2030. A substantial, but achievable and worthwhile goal for a better future.

For more information about the 59th session of the Commission on the Status of Women, or to view The Beijing Declaration in full, please visit www. unwomen.org.



CFNU President Linda Silas at CSW59



Canada's Report Card

In addition to the official national review for Canada, a supplementary review was provided to UN Women by the Canadian Labour Congress, in collaboration with 35 NGOs, Trade Networks and Independent Experts. In their conclusion they state the following:

of "Many Canada's past commitments towards gender have gone unrealized. equality fulfil Canada must the recommendations from UN bodies, including on the disappearances of Aboriginal women and girls. Canada must fully implement its national action plan on Women, Peace and Security, and ensure that its international aid, including funding to reduce maternal and child mortality, is consistent with international human rights standards. Closing these gaps in implementation can help to prevent the further entrenchment of gender inequality."

To read the full CLC report, visit www.policyalternatives.ca/beijing20.

Collective Bargaining and the Fight for Income Equality

From Oscar speeches to political pundits, much has been said in recent months about income inequality between men and women in the workplace. The actual numbers can be difficult to take; according to a 2011 Statistics Canada study, women make just 74 cents for every dollar a man makes in the same position; a disconcerting number in a country that is considered a leader in the fight against discrimination.

Even more concerning, according to a recent study done by the International Labour Organization, Labour Markets, Institutions and Inequality: Building just societies in the 21st century, income inequality in Canada is getting worse, not better. The study shows the wage gap widening in North America, as well as in Europe, Asia and Australia. Some of the issues they pinpoint as the source of this downward trend include more part-time positions, low minimum wages, and fewer organizations engaging in the collective bargaining process.

"Collective and bargaining minimum wages are two institutions directly affect workers' that compressing overall earnings, wage distribution by propping up wages at the bottom of the wage pyramid. Unions' influence on wage distribution in an economy can come from their role as actors representing labour in broader economic and social policy debates, but also as parties to collective bargaining agreements negotiated at either the firm or sectoral level."

- Labour Markets, Institutions and Inequality Summary



It is not uncommon to hear arguments that unions are no longer needed in North America – that the work has been finished, and that the needs of workers are already at the forefront of most business models. Unfortunately, an increased wage gap tells a different story.

Collective bargaining compels businesses to adhere to a structure by which employees are paid based on their levels of expertise, and not on their gender or any other identifying characteristic. Without this structure in place, the wage of each employee is at the discretion of the employer, and possibly influenced by political and personal ideals.

However, as the ILO explains, there are other areas that require attention from law makers in order for women to be able to participate fully in the labour market, and to be competitive with their male counterparts:

"Policies aimed at promoting full employment help to ensure opportunities in the labour market... For instance, the provision of public care services can facilitate women's ability to enter or remain in paid work, with consequences for both gender and income inequality. When care services are not publicly

Left: 1969, Melbourne, Australia Right: 2013, Calgary, Canada Times may have changed, but the problem remains the same



provided, workers either are not able to enter the labour market, or have less flexibility – and thus less choice and bargaining power – when they do enter."

- Labour Markets, Institutions and Inequality Summary

Clearly the solution to the wage gap is more complicated than simply collective introducing bargaining into more workplaces, increasing the minimum wage, or turning more parttime jobs into full-time jobs. However, it is important to focus on each of these areas individually to improve the function of a system that is currently not designed to make equality a priority in the workplace. In order for women to make these inroads, governments, employers and unions will have to work together to change a system that is designed to create inequality for women in the workplace.

For more information about the International Labour Organization study Labour Markets, Institutions and Inequality: Building just societies in the 21st century, visit www.ilo.org.



The International Council of Nurses (ICN) 2015 Conference, Global Citizen, Global Nursing, will be taking place in Seoul, South Korea this June. The event brings together thousands of nursing leaders from around the world to participate in symposiums and sessions, and listen to their peers discussing issues of importance to nurses from all corners of the globe. The 2015 event will be attended by several members of the CFNU National Executive Board, including NSNU president Janet Hazelton.

The ICN is a federation of 133 national nurses associations, representing more than 16 million nurses worldwide. Their work provides a global voice for nurses, influencing policy, and working in coordination with strategic partners to advocate for nurses and advance and sustain the nursing profession.

According to the ICN, the main objectives of the conference are:

- To advance and improve the coverage and quality of health services.
- To demonstrate the nursing contribution to the health of individuals, families and communities.
- To provide opportunities for an in-depth exchange of experience and expertise within and beyond the international nursing community.

During the conference members from the CFNU have been invited to present symposiums that were submitted for consideration, including:

Safeguarding Patient Safety through Responsible Workforce Design

Presenters: Debbie Forward (RNUNL), Linda Silas (CFNU), Maura MacPhee, Vicki McKenna, Tracy Zambory (SUN), Sandi Mowat (MNU)

Protecting the Human Rights of Nurses with Mental Health Disabilities and Addictions while Safeguarding Patient Care

Presenters: Linda Silas (CFNU), Linda Haslam-Stroud (ONA), Marilyn Quinn (NBNU), Elizabeth McIntyre

Rounding out CFNU involvement in the conference, Janet Hazelton has been invited to moderate one of the sessions, and an abstract submitted by the NSNU, From the Front Line of Nursing to the Policy Table, has been accepted for publication.

Other interesting and informative sessions for delegates to attend include: Direct Care and Patient Safety; Equity, Ethics and Human Rights; Health Promotion and Disease Prevention; and Disasters, Conflicts and Pandemics. As well, delegates can enjoy the keynote presentation from Dr. Mary Wakefield, Global Citizen, Global Nursing: Reshaping Nursing for the Future Needs of Citizens. Dr. Wakefield is the administrator of the Health Resources and Services Administration in the United States, an agency of the US Department of Health and Human Services.

The ICN 2015 Conference will take place from June 19 - 23. For more information on the conference, or the ICN, visit www.icn2015.ch.



May 1st Labour Day

Historical Influences in Modern Labour Relations

By MSVU Co-op Student Julia Chapman

When most Canadians think of Labour Day, their minds travel to the long weekend at the beginning of September, but in actuality, Labour Day originated more than 100 years ago, on May 1st.

The origins of Labour Day can be traced back to the late 1800's when many of the working class demanded shorter work days. At that point in time it was quite common to work 10 to 16 hour days in unsafe working conditions. Thousands of men, women and children were being overworked every year, resulting in numerous health problems and low life expectancy.

In April, 1872 the first organized demonstration for labour rights in Canada took place in Toronto. Tens of thousands of Canadians stood to strike when 24 leaders of the Toronto Typographical Union were imprisoned for striking for the right to a shorter work day. There was enormous public support to stand up against the issue, with the goal of changing the average work day to eight hours. The strike was organized by the Toronto Trades Assembly in hopes of

releasing the leaders. Then, striking was seen by government and authority figures as a criminal conspiracy to disrupt trade but at the same time people understood how important a role the trade unions played in our emerging society, therefore it was known that an agreement had to be made.

A few months later, a similar parade was organized in Ottawa, which inspired then Prime Minister, Sir John A. Macdonald to pass the *Trade Union Act*, which repealed the outdated law and decriminalized unions. The strike leaders were eventually released from jail, which culminated in the founding of the Canadian Labour Congress.

Support on the issue also came from other countries; in 1886 a protest was held at Haymarket Square in Chicago, Illinois. The demonstration began peacefully as workers were striking down the streets in support of an eight-hour work day. Shortly after the strike began a bomb went off, killing seven police officers and four citizens. Although it was unknown who was responsible for the

incident, eight workers were immediately convicted of the crime with little proof of being guilty.

In memory of the strikers and in support of worker's rights, Canada declared May 1st Labour Day, a national holiday with the purpose of giving workers the chance to campaign for better working conditions or pay. Labour Day has since evolved from its origins in Canada and the United States, into a long weekend celebration at the beginning of September. In many places across the globe, May 1st is still celebrated as International Workers' Day.

Within the NSNU, we recognize the importance of acknowledging the workers who stood up for their rights, so that we could have the benefits we enjoy today. We believe an extremely important aspect of healthy workplaces is ensuring respect for people from diverse backgrounds. So, take a moment on May 1st, the original Labour Day, to think back and be grateful for how far our labour movement has come, and remember to never hold back from standing up for what you believe is right.



On May 13th the College of Registered Nurses of Nova Scotia (CRNNS) will host their Annual General Meeting and Awards Banquet. The theme for this year's event is "RNs and NPs Leading with a Solution-Focused Approach".

The day consists of education forums and the AGM. It is based on sharing, learning and celebrating RNs and NPs, and the real solutions they have implemented to improve the profession and the delivery of client care. The CRNNS celebrates the work of RNs and NPs working in Nova

Scotia, and the strides made in the profession

During the AGM, members of the NSNU board of directors will be on hand to discuss the services our union provides to members and answer questions. Be sure to drop by the NSNU booth to learn more about your union representation.

Registration for the CRNNS 2015 AGM is free. The event will take place on Wednesday, May 13th at the Holiday Inn Harbourview in Dartmouth. To register, please visit www.crnns.ca.

CLPNNS Annual General Meeting And Professional Development Day

The College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Nova Scotia's Annual General Meeting will be taking place on May 21 – 22 at the Atlantica Hotel in Halifax. The AGM will feature an Awards Banquet and a Professional Development day, which will feature a "Legal Issues in Nursing" workshop, which all nurses are welcome to attend.

The Legal Issues in Nursing workshop will be facilitated by Chris Rokosh, RN, NPC (C), who is the President and CEO of Canada's first Legal Nurse Consulting firm, and has developed and facilitated similar workshops across North America. There will be ample opportunity to engage and ask questions during this valuable workshop.

Workshop highlights:

- Stats, issues and trends in nursing litigation
- Documentation, and lack thereof
- Review of recent case studies involving nursing negligence

Call 902-423-8517 to register. Registration closes April 30, 2015. This education can be used toward your Continuing Competence Program (CCP).

For more information or to register for the AGM for Legal Issues in Nursing workshop, visit http://clpnns.ca/annual-general-meeting/.



Changes to the Hospital Act designed to Streamline Service

The government of Nova Scotia has made amendments to the *Hospital Act*, with the goal of streamlining health care service and expanding the responsibilities of Registered Nurses and Nurse Practitioners.

The new amendments will enable NPs to discharge patients, and will allow RNs to assess, treat and release some patients from emergency departments and collaborative emergency centres. Previously, only physicians, midwives and dentists could release patients. Both RNs and NPs are licensed and educated to perform these tasks, but were not able to do so under the original legislation.

The Department of Health and Wellness has said the changes will help patients get the care they need more quickly, and ease the demands on physicians time so they can focus on treating patients with more severe medical needs.

The change will start at pilot sites to help phase in the changes. The sites include an inpatient unit at the Dartmouth General Hospital, the Yarmouth Regional Hospital emergency department, and Springhill's collaborative emergency centre.

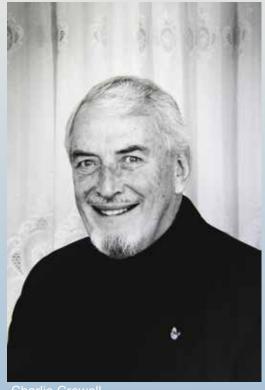
The pilot will begin in the spring, starting with NP patient discharge at Dartmouth General Hospital.

NSNU loses a staunch supporter and friend

Many NSNU members, past and present, will remember Charlie Crowell who worked as a Labour Relations Representative and Negotiator for NSNU for many years. Charlie had a long and colourful life filled with many adventures and vocations. When he retired from NSNU, Charlie travelled with his beloved partner Wendy. He loved driving to Florida in the winter months and recounted wonderful stories about fishing and sightseeing in out of the way places. Charlie loved to spend time with his family of four children, eight grandchildren and fifteen great-grandchildren.

Charlie had a fertile imagination and wonderful flair for words. He shared his poetry and short stories with close friends. They were filled with wonderful images and recollections of his boyhood years in Yarmouth County. Charlie always did a countdown to the Spring Equinox for his colleagues and, as we endure a particularly arduous winter, some of us will think of Charlie's countdown to Spring.





Charlie Crowell

SpringSong

But the greatest songs are those of Spring And during its gentle course Northward It brings a song to our minds Of birds Of brooks Of children playing Of breezes wafting through our hair Of warm sunshine on our backs And as difficult as life can be sometimes This wellspring of hope and promise Brings a smile to our lips When perhaps we want to frown Because our day is more often Filled with hurdles and obstacles And some folks are less than kind to us But we pause And we think Then we count the hours until that Vernal Equinox Moves the magic line betwixt Winter and Summer And fills us once more with JOY !!!

Charles A. Crowell March. 1992



Literacy is essential to a healthy and prosperous community and a vital skill to function in today's society. Unions have a responsibility to promote literacy as a right for all. Literacy helps workers succeed at their jobs and in life. Literacy is a critical foundation for further training and education and is an important vehicle for inclusion and participation. Recent federal funding cuts to literacy have weakened services to Nova Scotians currently in literacy programs as well as those Nova Scotians who could benefit from improving their literacy and essential skills.

The NS Peter Gzowski Tournament for Literacy (NSPGI) asks for your help in

improving literacy in Nova Scotia by sponsoring the event and registering a team. Funds raised support literacy activities throughout the province through Literacy Nova Scotia. Adult learners and their children who are served by 35 community learning organizations, such as Valley Community Learning Association are the main recipients. Your support will make a difference to adult learners by providing them with access to technology, placing valuable resources their classrooms, and creating scholarships and bursaries to help further their education.

On June 10, 2015, at the Links at Penn Hills in Shubenacadie, golfers will come together to support adult learners and be inspired, all while enjoying 18 holes of golf and a delicious barbeque supper. For information on the tournament and sponsorship levels visit www.nspgi.ca.

Literacy Nova Scotia is always looking for new members, and invites individual nurses to join for only \$5.00. If you would like to become a member, please visit www.literacyns.ca/membership.htm.

Keeping Up-to-Date

Over the past several months the NSNU has been in constant contact with our membership with regards to the ongoing issues facing nurses in Nova Scotia. With important events happening all the time, like Health Care Reform and our upcoming negotiations, it is now more important than ever that we are able to communicate with all of our members via What's Nu?, newsletter supplements, email and Union Calling messages.

If you have not been receiving messages from the NSNU, or if you have recently moved, please be sure to get in touch with Verna.Harrie@nsnu.ca to update your contact information. We keep your information safe, and do not share it with anyone outside of trusted NSNU distributors.

If you have any questions about the way your information is used, please contact nursesinfo@nsnu.ca.

Share Your Story

Here at the NSNU we're always looking for new and interesting stories to share in What's Nu?, and we know that there is no better source than our members working in the field. If you have a story that you would like to share, we encourage you to send it to our team at nsnu.office@nsnu.ca. We will consider all suggestions, and let you know if your story will be included in an upcoming issue.



Group Benefits Solutions
TRANSITION OF HEALTH
AND DENTAL BENEFITS
to Manulife

Transition of Health and Dental Benefits

Health Association Nova Scotia Health and Dental Plans Moved to Manulife on January 1, 2015

The Health Association Nova Scotia Health and Dental Plans are now being administered by Manulife as opposed to Blue Cross. This partnership with Manulife will ensure that the health and dental benefits we offer our plan members and retirees provides comprehensive coverage, fair premiums, and a positive plan member experience.

- If you have not yet received your new benefits card(s) in the mail, please contact the Health Association toll-free at 1-866-886-7246.
- Please remember to provide your new benefits card to your providers (pharmacy, dentist, health providers, etc.)

For more information, including a FAQ section, visit www.healthassociation.ns.ca.

If you are experiencing difficulties with your coverage during this transition period please contact Tina Snair, Benefits and Quality Assurance, at 902-832-8534 / 1-866-886-7246 or tina.snair @healthassociation.ns.ca.

Please be aware that any medications provided prior to this transition have been grandfathered, allowing uninterrupted service.

Federal Conservatives Revive Anti-Labour Bill C-377

In December 2011 Conservative Private Members Bill C-377, An Act to amend the Income Tax Act (requirements for labour organizations) was introduced in the House of Commons, and was subsequently passed by the House in December 2012. The bill as written would require Trade Unions to report on any transaction of \$5,000 or more, to be published on the Canada Revenue Agency website. Those expenses included, but were not limited to pensions, health plans, salaries, bargaining expenditures and lobbying activities. As this bill appeared anti-labour to many, it drew a great deal of criticism from Liberals and Conservatives alike.

Following Bill C-377 being passed by the House, it was sent on to the Senate for debate, where its legitimacy, necessity and constitutionality were brought into question. In June 2013 the Senate blocked the bill from becoming law in its present form and voted to adopt several extensive amendments that would cut back on the intrusive nature of the bill.

Despite the wide-sweeping amendments, the bill was returned to its original form in September, 2013 when Prime Minister Harper prorogued the government. When the bill was reintroduced in the House of Commons during the 2014 session, it appeared without any of the amendments that were originally adopted. With some of its more vocal critics now retired, the bill quietly made it through its second reading in the House, and was referred on to the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs, where it now sits.

It is difficult to say what will happen to Bill C-377 in Committee, and whether it will be passed and made into law. What is clear is that any law that seeks to intrude on the affairs of Trade Unions or in any way impede the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, as we believe this bill does, will be subject to Charter Challenges.

The NSNU maintains a high level of transparency and accountability to our members in our financial reporting. We believe this bill is unnecessary. We will update our members as this bill continues to be debated at the Federal Level, and we will work with governments and our union partners to prevent legislation that is harmful to the labour movement.



Nova Scotia Federation of Labour Bursaries

The Nova Scotia Federation of Labour is offering six bursaries of \$1000 each to full-time students who are going to attend university or trade school/community college in the 2015/16 year. For a complete listing of available bursaries and application requirements, please visit http://nslabour.ca/forunion-members/education/workplace-education/bursaries/.

Please pass this information along if you have someone in your household or if you know someone who is planning to go to school in September.

Does Johnson Offer Identity Theft Coverage?

Via Johnson Insurance

In the Winter issue of the Johnson Journal, we offered Nova Scotia Nurses Union members a chance to win a \$500 prepaid credit card for correctly answering the question, "Does Johnson offer Identify Theft Coverage?"

Hailey Standrick of Antigonish won the prize with her answer – Yes!

Cleaning up the mess left behind by Identity Theft can be overwhelming and stressful. This coverage provides financial support as you re-file loan, credit card, and credit report applications. It also covers the costs of any necessary documents that you may require, as well as long distance calls, postage, and lost wages due to missed work hours as a result of the situation. Certain legal fees



NSNU member, Hailey Standrick answered "Yes" and won a \$500 prepaid credit card!

and expenses arising from the event are also included.

Johnson is proud to be the preferred home and auto insurance provider for NSNU members.

For more information about Johnson insurance or a no obligation quote, please call us at 1-855-772-1544.

In the Next Issue of What's NU?

Council of Presidents

Federal Election: Nurses to speak up about Health Care issues

2015 CFNU Biennial Convention:
Planning an extraordinary
Ceilidh on the Hill

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Open: April 1, 2015



Johnson is proud to offer 50 scholarships valued at \$1000 each.

The Scholarship Program is open to children and grandchildren of Johnson Affinity group members and Home-Auto clients. Students must complete high school in 2015 and be entering into post-secondary education in the fall of 2015.

The deadline for applications is August 31, 2015.

Contact us today for more information.

Web: Johnson.ca and click "About Us" Email: scholarshipfund@johnson.ca

Call: 1-866-544-2673



Johnson has awarded over 1500 scholarships valued at more than \$1 million to support young Canadians across Canada in pursuit of their post-secondary education.



Nova Scotia Federation of Labour Events

Over the next several months the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour (NSFL) will be holding a series of conferences and conventions, that NSNU members are invited to attend. Information and registration forms for these events can be found on the NSFL website, nslabour.ca.

NSFL Women's Conference

May 22-24, 2015 Greenwood, NS

NSFEL Human Rights Conference

June 12 - 13, 2015 Dartmouth, NS

2015 NSFL Convention

October 25-28, 2015 Dartmouth, NS

Payment and registration forms for all NSFL events can be sent to:

Nova Scotia Federation of Labour 3700 Kempt Rd, Suite 225 Halifax, Nova Scotia B3K 4X8



Canadian Labour Congress Atlantic Labour School

The Canadian Labour Congress is putting on a conference at St. Francis Xavier University in Antonigonish, NS from May 31- June 5, 2015. Applicants must have the approval of their union to enroll. Registration deadline is May 1, 2015.

For more information about the Atlantic Labour School or to register to attend, visit http://www.canadianlabour.ca/news-room/events/2015-atlantic-labour-school.

Contact the CLC:

Canadian Labour Congress Atlantic Region 2282, Chemin Mount Road, Moncton, NB, E1G 1B4 Email: Atlantic@clc-ctc.ca Phone: 506-858-9350



Return undeliverable Canadian copies to:
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30 Frazee Avenue, Dartmouth, NS B3B 1X4
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