

# What's NU?

COURAGE TO LEAD • CONFIDENCE TO CHALLENGE • COMMITMENT TO CARE



## Stronger Together: Another Successful Annual General Meeting

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Celebrating National Nursing Week

Nearly 300 Nurses Attend NSNU Annual General Meeting



# President's Notebook

By Janet Hazelton, BScN, RN, MPA

## Violence – It's Not Part of the Job

Back in 2006, the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union, along with NSGEU, CUPE and the Nova Scotia Teachers Union, launched a bilingual campaign to address violence in the workplace.

We conducted in-depth research with a national firm, The Vector Poll, and worked closely with local academics at St. Mary's University and Mount Saint Vincent University to complete a study on the severity of the problem in our province. We developed communications and educational tools for our members.

The four Unions developed a website, held town hall meetings from one end of the province to the other, produced and broadcast several radio commercials on this subject and as a means of promoting the town hall events. We produced billboards, posters, print and bus shelter ads. The campaign, entitled "Workplace Violence: It's Not part of the Job," was a collaborative and widely heralded push to help stem the tide that is workplace violence, physical assaults,

harassment, threats, bullying, and intimidation – to name but a few.

We called ourselves the CAWV – The Coalition Against Workplace Violence. Our website URL was [www.StopWorkplaceViolence.ca](http://www.StopWorkplaceViolence.ca). As a coalition, we invested personnel, financial resources and countless hours talking about the issues, promoting the campaign and educating our members and the public about the harm that faced many Nova Scotians while on the job.

We garnered extensive earned media for our efforts, and, in 2007 the province introduced Violence in the Workplace Regulations. It seemed like a huge victory for the province, and was, in fact, applauded across the country.

Fast forward ten years and it seems as though much of our hard work fell on deaf ears, as acts of violence in the workplace continue to escalate and the problem appears to be getting worse.

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<b>Lorna Myers</b>	Executive Assistant
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<b>Nancy MacDonald</b>	Receptionist

**On the cover:** Nursing students smile for the camera during the NSNU AGM (See story on Page 11)



If you are an ardent reader of *What's NU?* you know that the NSNU has again been working hard to address the issue of workplace violence. In January 2016, the NSNU released a study entitled *Broken Homes*, a report on the state of long term care in Nova Scotia. In that report, a culmination of over three years of research and literary review, fifteen recommendations were outlined, including the need to address abuse and threats of violence levied against nurses. The study clearly determined that systemic issues date back over many decades.

In October of 2016, a highly threatening incident occurred at one of Nova Scotia's rural emergency departments. That incident was widely publicized and led to the creation of another stakeholder committee tasked to help resolve workplace violence in health care settings. A report from that committee was issued in December 2016, complete with a strategy to improve safety in our hospitals. Since the release of that review, many more acts of violence against nurses have been reported.

With that in mind, the NSNU and other nurse unions in the country, decided to use National Nursing Week as a platform to talk about this very serious problem. This year, National Nursing Week fell May 8-14.



It's disturbing and unacceptable.

Nurses endure one of the highest rates of workplace violence.

# VIOLENCE

## It's Not Part of the Job.

Nova Scotia Nurses' Union

@NS\_Nurses

Nova Scotia Nurses' Union

www.nsnu.ca/NotPartOfTheJob

During National Nursing Week ads like this appeared in newspapers and digital publications around Nova Scotia



# VIOLENCE

## IS NOT PART OF THE JOB

Everyone has the right to a safe workplace

Report all violence and aggression including hitting, pushing, spitting, foul language, threats and intimidation.

NOVA SCOTIA WORK SAFE. FOR LIFE. WCB OF NOVA SCOTIA

nova scotia health authority

HEALTH ASSOCIATION NOVA SCOTIA

CUPE Nurses Union NSGEU UNIFOR the Union | Canada

An anti-violence poster developed by the four health care unions and other stakeholders in the province

The NSNU launched a social media campaign, developed a poster, published print ads in Nursing Week features, produced two television commercials and a short video message from me, and created a webpage dedicated to this subject matter – all intended to make health care facilities safer for those who receive and provide care.

We want Nova Scotians to see the value of this campaign as it relates to public safety and awareness. Our message is critical in allowing nurses and other health care workers to provide care for those in need without fear of violence and abuse at the hands of those who, for whatever reason, do not recognize the grave harm they inflict.

In mid May I travelled to Barcelona to participate in the International Council of Nurses Congress – an

international gathering of thousands of nurses who explore nurses' leading role in the transformation of care, with a particular focus on universal health coverage, Sustainable Development Goals and human resources for health. The Congress provides an outlet for nurses to build relationships and to disseminate nursing knowledge and leadership across specialties, cultures and countries. The three ICN pillars – Professional Practice, Regulation and Socio-Economic Welfare – frame the scientific programme and the dynamic exchange of experiences and expertise.

I was part of the CFNU team presenting on workplace violence at ICN, where we had the opportunity to showcase the NSNU television commercials on workplace violence, the same commercials that we

aired and shared during National Nursing Week.

It is disheartening that we continue to face issue of violence and intimidation in the workplace. The launch of yet another "Violence – It's Not Part of the Job" campaign in 2017 means that our work is not yet done. We will continue to work with our brothers and sisters in Unifor, NSGEU and CUPE, as well as healthcare stakeholders in government and beyond to help improve safety for all workers.

It might seem like a tall order, but we cannot give up the fight or hope that one day our workplaces will be safer, free of violence and abuse, and more conducive to improved mental and physical health.



NSNU commercials and social media posts depicted the aftermath of violent incidents against nurses in facilities and patient's homes. Though disturbing, the ads are a realistic interpretation of what nurses are subjected to at work.

**Community Care  
nurses should  
not have to  
worry about  
their safety.**

[www.nsnu.ca/NotPartOfTheJob](http://www.nsnu.ca/NotPartOfTheJob)



**VIOLENCE - It's Not Part of the Job.**



## Self Defense – Some Locals Taking Matters Into Their Own Hands

In mid April, the VON Yarmouth local of the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union held a violence prevention session sponsored by their own Violence Prevention Committee.

This subcommittee of the VON Yarmouth Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee held self defence training for all staff in that area. It was well received and participants learned techniques to help avoid and extract victims

of assault, and others, from a threatening situation. Corporal Mario Ross was on hand to provide expert advice and training.

The local would like to thank Cpl. Ross for taking the time to work with the nurses, and those who came out for the training.

We all hope you will never have to put the training to use.



Cpl. Ross shows VON Yarmouth nurses how to protect themselves from an assailant



# National Nursing Week

## Violence – It's Not Part of the Job

*By Janet Hazelton, President of the NSNU*

*Published during National Nursing Week in various newspapers and online resources*

Twelve stitches, a tetanus shot, pain medication and an icepack to keep the swelling and bruising to a minimum.

Sounds like a typical day in the emergency department of any Nova Scotia hospital. The only difference is the patient is a nurse. Not a hockey player, not a slip and fall victim, but a nurse who's been assaulted by her patient.

Nurses are among the most likely professionals to become victims of workplace violence. Each year on average, about 1000 Canadian nurses are hurt severely enough to miss work. That's more than police and firefighters combined.

The NSNU is sharing this because being kicked, punched, spit on, or pinched is a daily event for nurses in Nova Scotia, and it needs to stop.

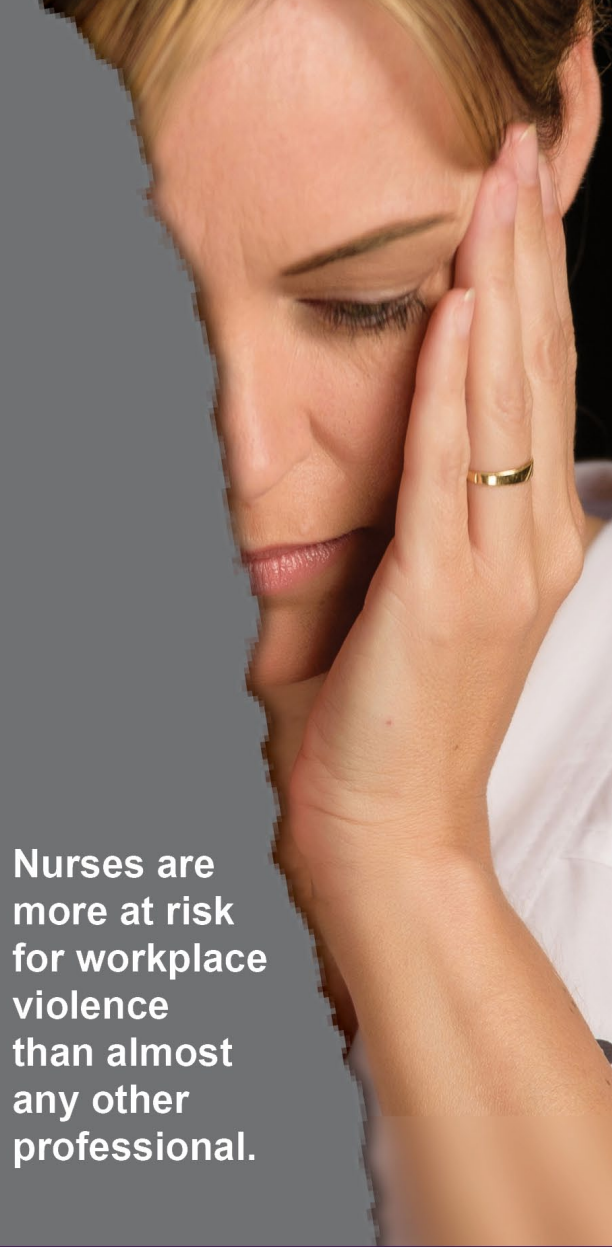
Sadly, the statistics are likely far worse as nurses seldom report incidents of abuse. There is a prevailing sentiment among nurses that violence, outbursts, physical and verbal harassment are just part of the job. It's a notion that the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union (NSNU) and our provincial counterparts have been working for decades to dispel.

Across Canada nurse unions have been working to make tangible changes in Acute, Long-Term and Community Care to protect nurses. To that end, I'm involved in committee work to improve conditions in community emergency departments, as well as in long-term care, where the rates of violence are significantly higher. Progress has been made within these committees, but it's not enough. Employers, workers, and the public must work together to ensure safer work environments.

It's up to all Nova Scotians to be compassionate and understanding when we enter health facilities. We must ensure that those who are providing care for our loved ones are able to do it safely and without the fear of violence.

The NSNU is using National Nursing Week as a platform to talk about this very serious problem.

This National Nursing Week, May 8-14, let's work together to make health facilities safer for those who provide care. Let's be vigilant, let's end violence in the workplace.



**Nurses are  
more at risk  
for workplace  
violence  
than almost  
any other  
professional.**

# VIOLENCE

## It's Not Part of the Job.



@NS\_Nurses



Nova Scotia  
Nurses' Union

[www.nsnu.ca/  
NotPartOfTheJob](http://www.nsnu.ca/NotPartOfTheJob)




# Highlights from the 2017 NSNU Annual General Meeting

From April 24-27 the NSNU welcomed close to 300 members to the Best Western Glengarry Hotel in Truro for the 2017 Annual General Meeting and Education Day. The event was a wonderful success, with more attendees for both events than ever before, and lively conversation, speakers, exhibitors and more.

## Open Forum and Regional/Component Meetings

The event began on Monday, April 24th with an Open Forum, during which NSNU president, Janet Hazelton provided an update on bargaining across the country, and addresses standardized uniforms vendors and provisions. The event provided an opportunity for members to ask questions of the President and bring up topics of interest to their locals. Janet appreciated the chance to have an informal discussion with members before diving into the rigours of AGM business.

Following the Open Forum, members attended their regional and component meetings to discuss issues pertinent to their locations and sectors. Led by their dedicated representatives on the NSNU Board of Directors, members heard updates on ongoing issues and were able to share their thoughts and concerns.



Janet Hazelton addresses NSNU members and guests during the AGM



The Finance Committee presents their report



Hon. Leo Glavine responds to questions from members on issues relating to health care

## Members Question the Minister of Health

April 25th marked the beginning of the AGM Business Days, which were filled to the brim with union business including financial reports, voting on resolutions, new Union initiatives and more. We were also joined by many wonderful guest speakers who took the mic over the two-day meeting to share their experiences and advice with attendees.

On the morning of April 25th the NSNU welcomed Minister of Health, the Honourable Leo Glavine, who arrived for a Q&A with members. Mr. Glavine has been Minister of Health for nearly four years, and in that time he has attended three NSNU Annual Meetings and has fielded some difficult questions from members on issues that affect their work life and the quality of patient care provided in Nova Scotia

This year, questions were asked on topics relating to workplace violence, investment in long-term care, stability and working conditions in community care, and overcrowding in acute care.





A member speaks to a resolution before delegates vote.



## Resolutions

During the AGM members debated and voted on resolutions submitted by locals and members of the Board. In total, there were five resolutions brought before the membership, and one requiring a constitutional amendment.

That resolution would require each union local to elect a Joint Occupational Health and Safety representative to their local executive. The response from AGM delegates toward the resolution was quite positive, and an

overwhelming majority voted in favour.

Other resolutions covered issues relating to identifying and addressing domestic violence; lobbying the government to improve access to mental health services; lobbying the government to include nurses in PTSD legislation; and continuing the call for improvements to the NCLEX-RN exam, or a replacement of the exam to address high failure rates among Nova Scotia nursing graduates.

# NSNU 2017 Strategic Plan

Earlier this year, the Board of Directors of the NSNU embarked on the process of developing a new strategic plan for the organization. With the assistance of an outside facilitator, Gerard Murphy, the Board met to define our goals and objectives, and set into place a plan to see us forward.

With some staffing input, the Board conducted a full SWOT analysis in order to determine our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and potential threats.

Strategic planning is an organization's process of defining its strategy or direction, and making decisions on allocating its resources to pursue this strategy. The process is about setting goals, determining actions to achieve the goals, and mobilizing resources to execute the actions.

The Board identified three key areas in which to focus our energy and resources, creating realistic and achievable directives for the next few years:

## Strategic Direction 1

Develop and implement communications strategies that promote greater visibility, identity and participation in the NSNU, provide enhanced educational opportunities for members and locals, and heighten the respect and value of nursing in the workplace and in the eyes of the public.



## Strategic Direction 2

Strive for bargaining that will ensure that improved benefits and conditions of work will apply equally to all nurses in every healthcare sector.

## Strategic Direction 3

Continue to strengthen the role of the NSNU as an important stakeholder and active and respected participant in public policy deliberations about nursing, the Social Determinants of Health and the future of healthcare in Nova Scotia.

To view the full strategic plan, go to [www.nsnu.ca/strategicplan](http://www.nsnu.ca/strategicplan).



# Tim Hague Sr.

## A Story of Amazing Determination

A tremor in one toe and an intense hour of Google searches; that's all it took to make a life-altering self diagnosis. That information, coupled with a familial history of the neurodegenerative brain disorder, made it almost undeniable. Although it took a couple of months to summon the courage to get a formal diagnosis, (he opted instead to embark on a once-in-a-lifetime vacation with his wife) this long-time registered nurse sensed what his fate might hold.

The father of four and devoted husband received the news that he had Young Onset Parkinson's Disease in February of 2011. In spite of having a progressively debilitating disease the otherwise physically fit Texas-born Tim Hague Sr. competed in his first triathlon the summer of that same year. And that was only the beginning.

Tim Sr. shared his deeply personal story with close to three-hundred nurses attending the NSNU Annual General Meeting in Truro on April 26th. His affable

presentation style and his background in nursing made the retelling of his journey all the more engaging, relatable and inspirational. He talked about caring for his dad who also had Parkinson's, and his "Live Your Best" philosophy for life.

Many know Tim Sr. as one half of the father-son duo that, against all odds, won the first Amazing Race Canada competition in 2013. Since that time, Tim Sr. has continued to be an outspoken advocate for Parkinson's and healthy living.

Though his trembling left hand betrayed his otherwise healthy appearance, Tim stood firm at the front of the room on April 26th as the Winnipeg transplant received a standing ovation for his words of encouragement and message of hope.

The Nova Scotia Nurses' Union wishes to thank Tim Sr. for making our event a stop on his first-ever visit to our province.

## The Giving Spirit

Never let it be said that the giving spirit is not alive and well among NSNU nurses, who raised an astonishing \$39,640.34 for striking Chronicle Herald workers during the AGM. On Thursday, April 27th Ingrid Bulmer and Frank Campbell from the Halifax Typographical Union (HTU) travelled to Truro to accept the donation

Donations for the HTU were pledged by small and large locals

during a rousing passing of the hat, which was spurred on by a series of friendly challenges between locals and other organizations in the room. Thank you to all who stepped up to help make things just a little bit easier for Herald employees who have been on the picket line since January 2016.

In addition to the incredible donation for HTU, locals also brought with them donations of

dignity products for the Colchester Food Bank. On April 26th, Food Bank representative, Farrah Allen was on hand to accept seven large bags and hundreds of dollars worth of products that will be made available to those in need.

Finally, one of the great highlights of every AGM is the charity auction. Items from the auction are donated by NSNU locals and other sponsors, and the proceeds go to



# 2017 Honorary Members

Each year, the NSNU puts out a call for nominations for Honorary Membership. The call is rarely necessary as members are quick in submitting nomination forms for their friends and colleagues who have served the profession and the union with all their heart.

Members are recognized for their activities and involvement in NSNU which include such things as length of time involved with NSNU, Boards, Executives or committees, and any outstanding accomplishments the nominee performed.

Honorary Membership is conferred once the member is retired, or about to retire, or is in receipt of permanent disability and is no longer employed as a member or staff for a period longer than six months. Honorary Membership may also be

conferred posthumously. Only a small number of NSNU staff members have been granted this status, including Tom Patterson, Dianne Geddes, Winnie Kettleison and Cherry Gauthier.

This year, this prestigious award was given to two well-deserving members; Penny Joudrey and Sandra Rizzato. Penny was nominated for her committee work at the provincial and local level by her good friend and co-worker at the Dartmouth General Hospital, Janis Ritcey. Sandra was nominated for her commitment, activism and dedication to the

NSNU by her good friend and co-worker, Marilyn Rizzato from New Waterford Consolidated.

Congratulations to both recipients. They join a growing list of distinguished NSNU Honorary Members.

On April 26th, the NSNU was very pleased to welcome eleven Honorary Members at the AGM Banquet. It was a true pleasure to see each and every one of them – happy and still proud NSNU retirees.

Penny Joudrey

Sandra Rizzato

a local charity. This year's auction proceeds were donated to the Marguerite Centre, an organization that provides housing and support to women who are recovering from addictions. In total, proceeds from the auction and a 50/50 draw culminated in a donation of \$4,573 for this wonderful organization.

Thank you to all members who helped to make these donations possible.



Left: Ingrid Bulmer and Frank Campbell accept HTU donation



Right: Farrah Allen accepts dignity products for the Colchester Food Bank



Lilo Wessels, Louise Bradley and Tim Tokarz each spoke individually and then joined together for a panel discussion

## #Mind Your Health NSNU Education Day

This year, the NSNU set aside a full day to focus on mental health in our workplaces during our annual Education Day. On April 27th, the NSNU welcomed over 300 nurses to participate in sessions that shed light on this problem, while offering inspiration and some solutions.

Canadian workplaces have a long way to go before they can be called mentally healthy. In Canada alone, mental health problems and illnesses account for more than one third of disability claims and two-thirds of disability costs. Nurses and other health care workers experience high rates of PTSD and other mental health issues resulting from negative experiences while on the job.

The NSNU was pleased to welcome Louise Bradley, president and CEO of the Mental Health Commission of Canada to the NSNU Education Day. As the first speaker of the day, Louise, who is also a registered nurse, shared a first-hand and sometimes very personal account of mental health. She described hospitals and other care centres as some of the most toxic workplaces.

She also spoke about *The Standard*, a guide intended to improve mental health in our worksites. A global first, *The Standard* is a “made-in-Canada” set of guidelines, tools and resources to help employers promote mental health and prevent psychological harm at work.

Our second presenter was Tim Tokarz, a registered nurse from Ontario who suffers from PTSD. Tim’s experience with post traumatic stress disorder is

extensive and his ability to talk about it so openly is brave and inspiring. Tim gave a very honest description of the risks and realities of PDST, particularly for health care workers who are repeatedly exposed to harsh situations.

The Education Committee then introduced Mark Grant, Halifax Team Leader and Dog Evaluator with Therapeutic Paws, who gave a brief introduction about the non-profit organization. On site during the event were therapy dogs, ready to offer comfort to those with anxiety, stress, depression and other mental health concerns. For those seeking a little puppy love, they were an ideal escape from the sometimes deep discussions.

Lilo Wessels, RN, Labour Relations Representative/Addictions and Mental Health Specialist, also presented at the NSNU education session offering advice, support and professional guidance for those dealing with addictions. Lilo enlightened the group about the various coping mechanisms available for nurses who work with people suffering with addictions.

The final item on the morning agenda was a panel discussion/Q&A with Louise Bradley, Tim Tokarz, and Lilo Wessels. It was well received.

The afternoon session was light and a perfect departure from a typical nursing day. Nurses enjoyed the morale and team building exercises led by motivational speaker, Tyler Hayden. The life coach and overall funny guy provided levity - a well deserved time to laugh, relax and forget, if only for an hour or two, about the tougher side of being a nurse.



Tyler Hayden brought some much-needed laughs during the afternoon on Education Day





## NSNU Welcomes Nursing Students to AGM

Every year, the NSNU welcomes nursing students from all NSCC Campuses, Dalhousie University (Halifax and Yarmouth Campuses), St. Francis Xavier and Cape Breton University to participate in our Annual General Meeting activities and our Education Day sessions.

This year, 21 student nurses registered to attend, all at varying stages of their studies. We also welcomed Leah Carrier, Vice President of the Canadian Nursing Students' Association.

The NSNU is always encouraged by the feedback we receive from the students. They are keen to understand the ins and outs of the labour movement, union activism and the realities of nursing. At the AGM, they get firsthand accounts of the triumphs, trials and tribulations of being a nurse, but also strategies and education that will serve them well throughout their vocation.

We are happy to share some of their feedback with our members, especially those who attended the AGM and took time to speak with the students, offering them words of encouragement as they prepare to embark on nursing careers.

*My name is Katlyn, a recent Dalhousie University Yarmouth student attendee of the NSNU AGM. I wanted to reach out to say thank you for opportunity and invitation to attend the annual general meeting. This opportunity is something I wish all nursing students could experience as I believe I have gained so much knowledge and connections within nursing just by attending. I would also like to extend a huge thank you to all of the nursing union staff and members as well, everyone was so welcoming and reaffirmed that my choice of nursing has been my best choice yet!*

*I look forward to seeing all of the positive outcomes because of the work the nursing union does, thank you again for such a wonderful experience.*

*Katlyn  
Dalhousie University, Yarmouth Site*

*I just wanted to personally thank you for organizing the students' accommodations and having us at the NSNU AGM. We thoroughly enjoyed our time and learned a lot! We felt everything was very well organized and we also felt very welcome in that environment!*

*Thanks again,*

*Samantha  
BSc Nursing Student Dalhousie University*

*I just wanted to send a big thank you for allowing students like me an opportunity to attend this year's AGM. I couldn't be prouder or more excited to be a nurse especially with such an amazing Union backing our profession ,which allows us to do what we do best; care! I'll plan to be involved and support my union and all unions going forward into my career. Thank you again for the amazing opportunity!*

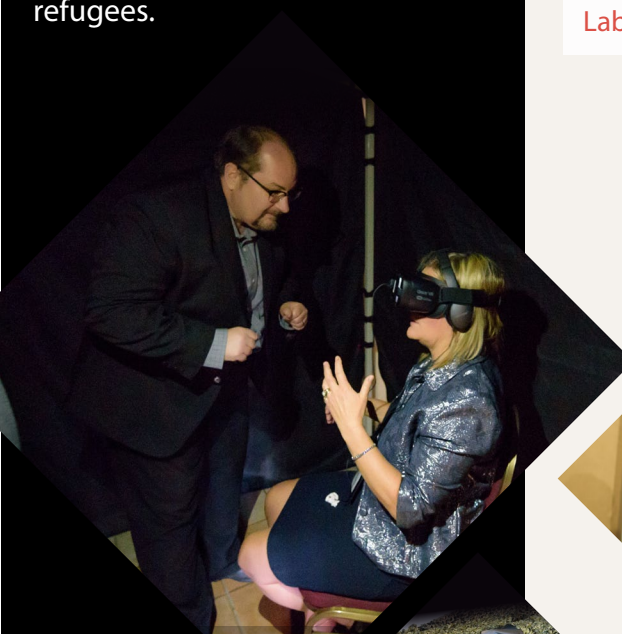
*Jolene  
Future PN Graduate, 2017*

## Refugee Simulator


NSNU members who attended the AGM were given a truly unique opportunity to experience the reality of the refugee crisis. The Canadian Labour Congress shared their powerful virtual 3-Dimensional exhibit that sheds insight into the fear, confusion and disorientation faced by many refugees seeking asylum in Canada.

This emotional, virtual journey is an innovative and interactive film experience that simulates a refugee crisis but on familiar soil.

Thank you to the CLC for providing the simulator and taking the time to allow NSNU nurses to get a glimpse into the horrors faced by refugees.



Janet Hazelton was disturbed by her experience in the CLC Refugee Simulator



## Special Guests



Paula Doucet,  
President, NBNU



Mona O'Shea,  
President, PEINU



Linda Silas,  
President, CFNU



Alex Furlong,  
Atlantic Regional  
Director, Canadian  
Labour Congress



Danny Cavanagh,  
President, NS Federation  
of Labour



Chris Parsons, Provincial  
Coordinator, NS Health  
Coalition



Tony Tracy, Atlantic Regional  
Representative - Nova Scotia,  
Canadian Labour Congress





A Family Affair

Our youngest Observer was quiet, attentive, and cute as a button

Husband and wife team, Liam and Mairead

Mother and daughter duo, Belinda and Emma

All Dressed Up  
The Banquet, held on April 26th, gave members a chance to dress up and enjoy good food and music with friends



# National Nursing Week: #YesThisIsNursing

National Nursing Week took place from May 8-14, 2017; the theme for this year's celebration was #YESThisIsNursing. The hashtag was designed to encourage nurses to speak out about the real work they do on a daily basis – both expected and unexpected. Throughout the week, stories were shared on social media that demonstrated how nursing has evolved over the years. It provided a glance into an ever-changing system, and the nurses who work diligently to keep it operating smoothly.

During nursing week, members of the NSNU took a little time to celebrate the great work they do year-round with their colleagues. On the next few pages you will see photos and stories from nursing week events around the province.

The NSNU would like to thank all nurses for your tremendous commitment to patient care. We are lucky to have you.



Bayside Home nurses in Barrington



NSNU members at Eastern Shore Memorial Hospital in Sheet Harbour



NNW sign at Cove Guest Home in Cape Breton



Nurses at Soldiers Memorial Hospital in Middleton



Sue Burgess with NSCC Practical Nursing Student Ashley Maltby at Hants Community Hospital during National Nursing Week. Ashley is hoping to start her career at a facility represented by the NSNU. We look forward to welcoming her as a member!



The crew at VON Halifax





The IWK held their annual Nursing Week tea on May 9th. It was a wonderful time with lots of good food and good friends.



On May 11th Cape Breton Regional Hospital held a local meeting and a small celebration for Nursing Week. Janet Hazelton made the trip to Sydney to attend the event.

During the evening, Janet and VP Eastern Region/Local President Gerri Oakley stopped in to say hello to nurses working the evening shift at CBRH, bringing some NSNU cupcakes and a fruit tray so they could be part of the celebration.



## Why Did You Become a Nurse?

Why did you become a nurse?

You have probably been asked that question before. It is a difficult job, one that requires facing trauma on a regular basis; but those difficult days are often interspersed with triumphs, happiness and relief. Nursing is a truly unique profession, and it takes a special kind of person to do it.

The NSNU would like to share stories from our members about why they chose to take on this challenging and rewarding profession.

If you would like to share your story with the NSNU, you can send a message to coleen.logan@nsnu.ca. Those who wish to write and submit their own stories are welcome to do so, and others who would prefer their story to be written by a member of the NSNU communications team can contact Coleen and an interview will be arranged.

We look forward to sharing these stories from NSNU members in upcoming issues of *What's Nu?*



# Francis Harper Memorial Award 2017

## A Highly Deserving Recipient



Each year, the IWK accepts nominations for the prestigious Francis "Fran" Harper Memorial Award. Fran Harper was a dedicated and caring nurse who worked at the IWK Health Centre until her retirement in 2001. Working the MABLE Program enabled Fran to work with mothers and families, ensuring a healthy transition to home during the postpartum period.

Fran, who served proudly in the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union and was actively involved in her Local, understood the importance of continuing education, as evidenced by her graduation from St. Francis Xavier University, shortly before her retirement. Her community service showed that she was committed to improving the health of women having babies. The Fran Harper Memorial Award is presented annually to a nurse who has demonstrated a commitment to improving the lives of women, children and families. The successful candidate must also show an eagerness to continue with education.

The 2017 recipient is no stranger to nurses in this province. On May 9th, the IWK presented Heather McDonald with the Francis Harper Memorial Award. Her face, and her commitment to her profession and her union, is familiar to many.

Heather McDonald, a former president of the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union, is a dedicated and caring nurse who has worked at the IWK from the time she was a new grad, back in 1974.

She demonstrated her understanding and appreciation of continuing education when she enrolled in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program in 1996, graduating in 2006 from St. FX.

Heather was elected to the NSNU Board of Directors in 1988 when her youngest child was only six weeks

old. She advanced in her union activism to become the Provincial President in 1996, holding that post until 2002.

In 2001, Heather helped lead as nurses and other health care workers waged a militant struggle in defense of their rights, risking personal fines to defy the government's controversial Bill 68, an *Act to Continue Healthcare Services in Nova Scotia*. Bill 68 was introduced by government in the name of "fair dispute resolution." In addition to criminalizing strikes – backed by threats of large fines against unions and individuals – the legislation gave government the right to impose a contract without negotiation or arbitration. It was a trying time, but Heather stood firm in her resolve. Eventually, government backed down, proposing instead the process of "final-offer-selection."

This award is very special for Heather as she and Fran were co-workers and friends, both very involved in the NSNU.

It was with great pleasure that the IWK Local presented Heather with the award in the presence of her husband Bob, her daughter Jennifer and her twin grandsons. Fran's family, including her daughters Angela Harper and Kim Beals, and her granddaughters Ariel Beals and Yasmine Harper, were also in attendance at the presentation ceremony.

Heather will be retiring this year after many years of devotion to her patients and their families, nursing, the IWK, and the NSNU.

The Nova Scotia Nurses' Union congratulates Heather on receiving this well deserved award and on her upcoming retirement.





# LOCAL ELECTIONS

## How Do They Work?

When locals have turnover of their executive officers, there are procedures in place that the local must follow. For reference on how to conduct elections, please visit the website at [nsnu.ca/constitution](http://nsnu.ca/constitution). This information is found on page 31 of the Constitution (Appendix "B": By-Laws Governing Chartered Locals).

At the 2017 AGM, a resolution was submitted that would ensure every local has representative of a Joint Occupational Health and Safety Member on the executive;

*Therefore Be It Resolved that the JOHS Committee member shall be an elected position on each local executive. If there is more than one JOHS committee*

*member for each local (multiple sites), one committee member shall be elected to sit on the local executive for the full term or the local may decide to rotate the position. This position shall enjoy the same rights and privileges as other local executive members.*

Each local is now tasked to conduct this process so that your local has representative of the following Local Executive Positions, bearing in mind that it is permissible to combine the offices of some roles.

- President or Co-Presidents
- One (1) or more Vice-Presidents
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Joint Occupational Health and Safety Member

If after you have reviewed the Constitution you still have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact Jean Candy, Executive Director of the NSNU at the provincial office.

## GEARING UP FOR PRIDE 2017

Leaves are on the trees, flowers are blooming and birds are chirping. That can only mean one thing: it's time to gear up for Pride 2017!

The NSNU is proud to represent diversity, and participating in Pride is a wonderful way to show our support for LGBT2Q+ nurses and the community around us. This summer there will be several events in Nova Scotia, including the first ever parade in Amherst, the always successful Halifax and Sydney Pride Parades, and potentially others as well.

As usual, we expect to have a strong showing of NSNU members, staff, friends and family walking in the Halifax Pride Parade. If you would like to join us, please contact [lorna.myers@nsnu.ca](mailto:lorna.myers@nsnu.ca) so we can confirm our numbers. Members of our group will receive an NSNU Pride t-shirt to wear at the event.

If you plan to take part in another Pride Parade around the province, please let us know so we can send you some NSNU shirts to take with you. Be sure to take lots of pictures and send them to [coleen.logan@nsnu.ca](mailto:coleen.logan@nsnu.ca) so we can share them in the September issue of *What's Nu?*.



### Pride Dates

**Amherst Pride Parade**  
June 2, 2017

**Halifax Pride Parade**  
July 22, 2017

### Other Dates Pending

Dates for parades across Nova Scotia will be posted at [nsnu.ca/pride](http://nsnu.ca/pride) when they become available.

# Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

## Nurses Included in Legislation

Under a new proposed law, paramedics, nurses, correctional officers, firefighters and police will get easier access to workers' compensation for PTSD injuries. Legislation aimed at helping emergency responders, nurses and jail guards get compensation if they suffer from PTSD is long overdue, but welcomed by many who suffer from the disorder.

On Friday April 28th, government tabled changes to the Workers' Compensation Act. It will mean workers in particular fields who have post-traumatic stress disorder are presumed to have become ill because of their jobs. Right now, employees must prove their injuries are work-related.

NSNU President, Janet Hazelton was on hand for the tabling of the proposed plan, and feels the law,



Janet Hazelton speaks to media following the release of the new PTSD legislation

if passed, will benefit those who suffered a mental injury on the job. President Hazelton says these changes will define who is eligible for presumptive PTSD coverage.

She was accompanied by Tim Tokarz, a member of the Ontario Nurses' Association who lives with PTSD and spoke to the media about his experience. Tim was in Nova Scotia to speak at the NSNU AGM Education Day.

The NSNU and CFNU counterparts have been advocating for this coverage and ensuring nurses are not excluded as is the case in some jurisdictions.

President Hazelton was invited to the bill introduction and recognized for her advocacy.



Tim Tokarz, an Ontario nurse who lives with PTSD, speaks to the media about his experiences and the importance of including nurses in PTSD legislation



**NSFL 2017  
Convention**

The NSNU will be sending our Board of Directors and representatives selected from the local draws held earlier this year to the 49th Convention of the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour at the Westin Hotel in Halifax from November 5th to the 8th, 2017. It will be an exciting gathering of trade unionists from across Nova Scotia.

If your local wishes to send a delegate or if you are interested

in attending on your own, please send your credential information before October 6th to qualify for the early bird registration fee of \$150.00. For all delegates who register after this date, the fee is \$200. The deadline for receiving all credentials for delegate registration is October 20th.

If you have any questions, please contact Joan Wark at 902-454-6735, joan@nslabour.ca, or visit the NSFL website at nslabour.ca.



# Canadian Labour Congress 28th Constitutional Convention



Above: Janet Hazelton and NSNU Board Members join labour activists from Nova Scotia for the CLC Convention in Toronto



Left: NSNU Board Members, Jayne Fryday and Chris Van Zoost join the CLC street party

Below: An NSNU flag pops among thousands of labour activists for the street party in Toronto's financial district



In May the Canadian Labour Congress held their 28th Constitutional Convention. Nova Scotia Nurses' Union president, Janet Hazelton and members of the Board joined 140 nurses and more than 3,000 labour activists from across the country in celebrating the work of the CLC and charting a path forward for labour activism in Canada.

The CLC speaks for workers on a national level, fighting for fairness and equity. The theme for the 2017 convention was "Together for a Fair Future", which spoke to the need for a united voice and the power of the labour movement as a whole to create positive change for Canadian workers. The theme is profoundly relevant today as inequality persists around the world.

Nurse leaders have a strong voice within the CLC. During the event New Brunswick Nurses Union president, Paula Doucet took the mic to speak in support of a resolution aimed at reducing workplace violence, and Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions president, Linda Silas spoke about the need for a national pharmacare program.

The convention had a full slate of speakers and special guests that ranged from poets and inspirational speakers, to politicians, youth activists and more. The event culminated in a "street party" in which thousands of labour activists took to the Toronto financial district to call for better jobs and a \$15 minimum wage. They also called for an end to rampant Islamophobia and xenophobia in Canada and abroad.



# Day of Mourning 2017

On Friday, April 28, Nova Scotia joined the rest of Canada and more than 80 countries worldwide to remember those who died, were injured or became ill at work. The Day of Mourning offers employees and employers the opportunity to publicly renew their commitment to improve health and safety in the workplace.

In 2016, more than 24,000 Nova Scotians were injured on the job, with about 5,800 of them injured seriously enough to lose time from work. Sadly, there were 20 workplace fatalities in Nova Scotia last year. Of those, two were caused by traumatic injuries in the



Janet Hazelton lays a wreath on behalf of the NSNU

workplace, and 18 were chronic fatalities due to health conditions and occupational disease. So far in 2017, there have been two fatalities.

The Nova Scotia Federation of Labour, WCB Nova Scotia and the Nova Scotia Department of Labour and Advanced Education, in partnership with Threads of Life, a charitable organization dedicated to supporting families affected by workplace tragedy, labour representatives, including NSNU President Janet Hazelton, came together at Province House and elsewhere to pause and remember all those who have suffered a workplace injury or death. Together, we are resolved to strengthen the culture of workplace safety that is growing in our province.



NSNU members from VON Yarmouth attend a local Day of Mourning ceremony

## Remembering the Westray Mine Explosion

It is impossible to discuss the Day of Mourning without acknowledging the Westray Mine Explosion, which is one of the deadliest workplace incidents in Nova Scotia's history. This year marks the 25th anniversary of the tragic day on May 9, 1992 when 26 miners were killed on the job.

In the wake of the Westray explosion, the United Steelworkers began to lobby for government to take action to protect workers from preventable workplace incidents, which were at the time called "accidents". Today we acknowledge that there are few true accidents on the job; almost all incidents can be avoided with adequate safety measures in place.

Changes did not happen overnight. It was 2004 before government acted on the recommendations of the Union, and amended the Criminal Code to make it possible for employers to be prosecuted for negligence leading to injury or death of workers.

This year we remembered the 26 men who didn't make it home from work, and we recommit to ensuring that doesn't happen to anyone else.



A monument in New Glasgow honours the 26 miners killed in the horrific explosion



# pei nurses

Prince Edward Island Nurses' Union

*30 Years in Solidarity*

On May 3rd the Prince Edward Island Nurses Union (PEINU) held their Annual General Meeting. This year they celebrated an important milestone, 30 years in solidarity. PEINU represents 1,200 nurses in that province.

NSNU President, Janet Hazelton, made the journey to attend the event and spoke briefly to bring greetings from nurses in Nova Scotia. One week prior, PEINU president, Mona O'Shea made the trip to Truro for the NSNU AGM.

It is a unique and special relationship that the Atlantic nurse unions share. Brought together not only by geography, but similar priorities and concerns, the Unions work closely together to make sure nurses in all of the Atlantic provinces are well represented.

Janet was pleased to be a part of the PEINU AGM. We look forward to seeing our friends from the Island and across Canada in June at the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions Biennial Convention in Calgary.



RNUNL President, Debbie Forward; NSNU President, Janet Hazelton; CFNU President, Linda Silas; and NBNU President, Paula Doucet attend the PEINU AGM

## CRNNS 2017 AGM – Nurses Still Challenge NCLEX Exam



Janet Hazelton and Jen Thiele staff the NSNU booth at the CRNNS AGM

"Change, Challenge, Opportunity - It Starts With Us." That's was theme for the College of Registered Nurses of Nova Scotia's Annual General Meeting on May 11th in Dartmouth. NSNU VP, Central Region, Jen Thiele was on hand to staff the NSNU exhibit, and joined several other NSNU members for the day-long event.

Of note, a resolution was introduced urging the College to re-evaluate the NCLEX exam. CFNU's member organizations, like the NSNU, have heard from students across the country that the exam continues to cause great distress and anxiety. Failure rates remain higher than usual. It is evident that our graduate nurses have not changed, and nor have our nursing programs. Canada's nursing students are highly qualified, competent individuals graduating from some of the best nursing programs in the world.

NSNU president, Janet Hazelton, spoke to the resolution about the NCLEX while at the event, and how it has failed our students. She went so far as to question whether or not we even need to have an exam.

For CFNU's national leadership, it's clear that there is a problem with the exam. Regulatory bodies like CRNNS are being asked, once again, to acknowledge this problem, and address the situation.

# <sup>GREAT</sup> 9 Reasons to Become an NSNU Activist

“What’s in it for me?”

You may ask yourself this question when thinking about taking a more active role in your union. There are many benefits to becoming an NSNU activist. We’ve pulled together just a few reasons why you might consider getting involved, if you’re not already.

## 1 **HAVING YOUR VOICE HEARD IN CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS**

One of the core reasons why nurses become active in the union is so their voices can be heard at the bargaining table. If you attend local meetings, or take the time to fill out a bargaining survey, you are helping to inform the Union as they prepare to go to the table.

In negotiations, the Union-appointed negotiator is joined by a provincial negotiating committee of members who have been elected by their colleagues to represent them. If you have ever wanted to be involved in determining your own contract, being engaged with the Union is how you do it.

## **FINDING YOUR NICHE WITHIN THE UNION**

# 2

There is a lot more to union life than just signing your contract on the dotted line. Nurses are multi-talented, well informed and have a lot to offer, which is why the NSNU invites members to join various committees.

Members hold executive roles within their locals, they help plan the AGM and Education Day, they participate in negotiations, they help choose scholarship and bursary recipients, and so much more. There is something for everyone at the NSNU.

## **ADVOCATING FOR YOUR PATIENTS**

# 3

Nobody knows what patients need more than the nurses who take care of them on a daily basis. Advocating for patients is one of the most important parts of your job.

The position of the Union on issues related to patient care comes from our membership – those who speak to us directly or share their thoughts at local meetings. Members often find that one voice isn’t enough to change the way things are in health care – but the voices of 7,000 nurses together is difficult to ignore.

## **4 JOINING A COMMUNITY OF NURSE ACTIVISTS**

If you have taken the time to flip through this issue of *What’s Nu?*, you have seen images of nurses having a blast attending our Annual General Meeting. That’s not because we’re hilarious all the time, it’s because they’re spending time with friends, doing something that matters to them.

There are so many wonderful people to meet who understand your experiences as a nurse. Many friendships have been forged between members from Yarmouth to Sydney and everywhere in between, as members come together for meetings, events and rallies.



## 5 SPEAKING FOR YOUR PROFESSION

One of the most important reasons to be involved with the NSNU is the opportunity to speak for nurses. Your experiences are unique and valuable, but they often go unheard outside of your inner circle. Engaging with the Union allows you to take what you know and use it to influence outcomes and, ultimately, improve work life for yourself and your colleagues.

## 6 BEING INFORMED ABOUT ISSUES THAT AFFECT YOU

Nursing and labour groups across Canada do research and prepare reports on all kinds of issues that affect you as a front-line health care worker. They use this information to lobby the government, fight detrimental legislation and promote positive changes. Reading up on the work being done by the Union and allied groups can help inform your decisions as you go to the polls. You never know, it might even inspire you to take an active role in seeking positive changes in your workplace and community.

## 7 REPRESENT YOUR UNION AND YOUR PROFESSION

Have you ever seen an NSNU commercial or newspaper advertisement and wondered who our fabulous actors and models are? Fun fact: they're all members. The NSNU loves to showcase real nurses in all of our materials, and we encourage anyone who is interested in being a part of a photo or video shoot to get in touch with us. The experiences are enjoyable and we always have delicious treats at the shoots!

If you would like to become part of our elite rolodex of models, contact [coleen.logan@nsnu.ca](mailto:coleen.logan@nsnu.ca).

## 8 BEING PART OF THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

When nurses choose their careers, it's rarely with an eye toward activism, but one of the great privileges of being part of a public sector union is the opportunity to connect with others as a member of the labour movement.

There are perks to being involved with organizations like the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions, the Canadian Labour Congress, or the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour. NSNU activists attend conventions around the country, take part in rallies, and forge wonderful bonds with people from diverse backgrounds. The experiences that come with being a member of the labour movement cannot be replicated, and are worth taking advantage of.

## 9 OPENING YOURSELF UP TO NEW EXPERIENCES AND OPPORTUNITIES

NSNU members have many incredible opportunities to try new things, meet new people, further their education and enjoy once-in-a-lifetime experiences. Through our connections with CFNU and other labour groups, members have travelled nationally and internationally for conferences, participated in education programs like Eastern Labour School, and some have even gone on volunteering trips partially financed by the CFNU Solidarity Fund.

Even if you don't have the travel bug, you can still attend local events, take advantage of a long list of discounts offered by local businesses, and apply for scholarships and bursaries that are set aside for NSNU members and their children.



## Saskatchewan Nurse Fined for Facebook Status

In a previous issue of *What's Nu?* we shared the story of Carolyn Strom, a registered nurse in Saskatchewan who faced disciplinary action for comments she made on Facebook that were critical of the care her grandfather received during his final days in palliative care. The post was made in February, 2015.

Although Strom did not mention the names of any specific health care workers or facilities in the post, the Saskatchewan Registered Nurses' Association (SRNA) felt the comments were unprofessional and launched a disciplinary hearing against Strom.


In December 2016, the hearing committee found Strom guilty of professional misconduct and levied a fine of \$1,000 fine plus \$25,000 toward the cost of the disciplinary process.

The SRNA was adamant that they did not seek to "muzzle" nurses, just that posts on social media should be in accordance with the Canadian Nurses Association's Code of Ethics. As part of her punishment, Strom is required to complete an online ethics course through the CNA and write an essay showing that she understands what she did wrong and explaining how she plans to change her behaviour going forward.

Despite this discouraging outcome, Strom felt a surge of support from the community. The outrage was apparent on social media among nurses and others who felt health care workers should be entitled to express their frustrations online without fear of penalty. Nurses from across the country signed an open letter calling on the SRNA to reverse its decision,

and then launched a GoFundMe campaign to help pay Strom's fines. The full amount of \$26,000 was raised within two weeks.

Perhaps bolstered by the support from her community, Strom has launched an appeal of the decision. The NSNU will provide an update on this story as it progresses.



As social media provides an ever-changing landscape for public communications, nurses must be careful about the content that they post or share. Members of the NSNU should stay up-to-date on the Codes of Ethics and Standards of Practice for the Colleges of Registered Nurses and Licensed Practical Nurses to ensure they are using social media in a responsible way that protects them and the privacy of their patients.

Members may also refer to Email and Social Media Etiquette tips available on the NSNU website at [www.nsnu.ca/EmailandSocialMediaEtiquette](http://www.nsnu.ca/EmailandSocialMediaEtiquette).

If you have questions regarding responsible use of social media, please contact your Labour Relations Representative.



## Engineering Students Win Award for Collaborative Project with NSNU

In March of 2016, NSNU President, Janet Hazelton was invited to speak at a seminar with the Industrial Engineering class at Dalhousie University. The purpose of the talk was to give an overview of how health care was being restructured in Nova Scotia. After the seminar, Janet was approached by a faculty member from the Industrial Engineering department to gauge her interest in working with a group of students in their final year through the Capstone Project in Industry program. The NSNU applied to participate in the program, enlisting the help of the students to find ways to standardize and streamline some of the processes used at the Provincial Office.

It was decided that a team of four students could apply their knowledge of industrial engineering principles to the grievance and clinical capacity report handling process. Throughout the fall and winter semesters, the team set to work interviewing Labour Relations Representatives and other staff members, conducting a work-flow analysis. This helped them form process maps, later used to develop standard operating procedures for both grievances and clinical capacity reports. The team of students also conducted research into case management software, which could eventually be used to transition to an electronic system for handling grievances and clinical capacity reports. In addition to this, the students also developed a tool allowing education staff to better track which locals have received union-provided training sessions. This will help the Union plan

education sessions and track which topics have been covered.

The project came to a conclusion in April after the Dalhousie Engineering Capstone Conference at the Westin Hotel. This event gives engineering students a chance to showcase their design projects to industry partners, and to present the fruits of their labour to faculty members and fellow students. The team of engineering students that worked with NSNU (Ahmed Rayyan, Amer Hussein, Arsalan Ali, and Sudarsan Adhikari) were rewarded for their hard work and innovation at the Capstone Conference, taking home an award for top poster presentation. Their industrious efforts will be put to good use as NSNU navigates a future that may incorporate more technology into the services we provide. The NSNU congratulates them on their award and wishes them a happy graduation!



The team of students from Dalhousie with NSNU research associate, Justin Hiltz, researcher/educator, Paul Curry and president, Janet Hazelton

## Nurses Bound for Beantown



Nursing History Nova Scotia invites all nurses to join them in a trip to Boston for the Annual Tree Lighting ceremony, November 28 through December 2 with Atlantic Tours.

This event will mark the 46th year that Nova Scotia has given a tree to the people of Boston as thanks for relief efforts following the December 6, 1917, explosion of a munitions ship in Halifax Harbor. Within 24 hours of the disaster a train loaded with supplies and

emergency personnel was making its way from Boston to Nova Scotia.

If you are interested in being a part of this special celebration, which also teams nurses from Nova Scotia with our counterparts in Boston, please contact Edith at 902-435-1475.

It will be the perfect time to meet other nurses, get some festive shopping done, and share in a time-honoured holiday tradition with our friends to the south.

# NSNU Flag - Where Are We Now?

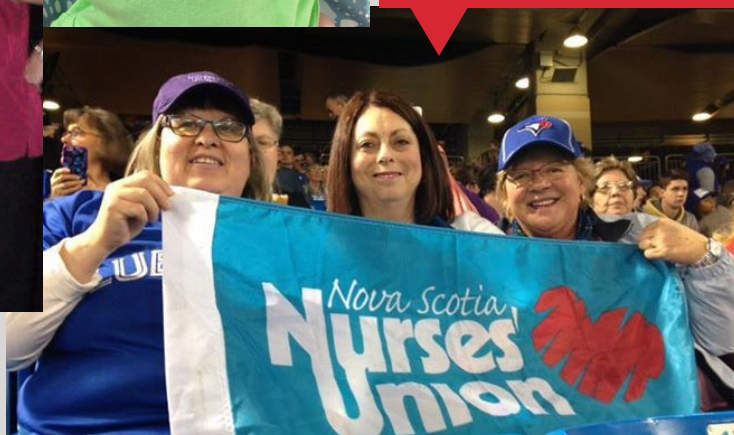
The NSNU flag occasionally pops up in some unexpected places. Here are a few shots of where NSNU members have taken our flag recently.



Even adorable babies are showing their NSNU Pride



Members Marilyn Greenwood and Susan Burgess fly the NSNU flag on a recent trip to Cuba



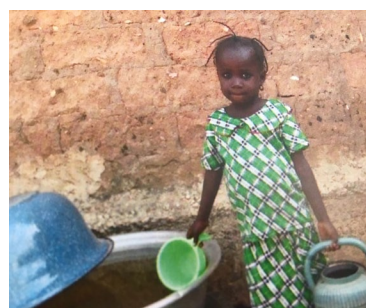
NSNU board members Michelle Lowe, Maria Langille and Jane Fryday show off the NSNU flag while taking in a Blue Jays game in Toronto

## Giving Back *Paying It Forward*

For decades, over four to be precise, the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union has been an excellent steward of the funds we collect from our dues paying members. We have invested wisely; we are frugal and resourceful. But we also like to give back. It's just good karma.

We believe in helping those, as is the nursing way, who face hardship. Most recently, we stepped up to help our brothers and sister at the Halifax Typographical Union, representing striking newsroom, press and prepress workers at The Chronicle Herald. We give annually to Transition House Association of Nova Scotia, as well as The Marguerite Centre. We have helped those battling cancer; those stricken by disaster through contributions to the Red Cross and Canadian Blood Services; and for over forty years, NSNU has fostered children through the former Foster Parents Plan, now called Plan Canada.

Founded in 1937 as Foster Parents Plan, that organization started out by providing direct aid to individual children and families. As their work grew



and evolved over many decades, they learned that lasting change for children requires a plan for the entire community. In 2006, they simplified their name to Plan to better reflect how we work.

Today, they are one of the world's oldest and largest international development agencies.

Not for profit, independent and inclusive of all faiths and cultures, they have only one agenda: to improve the lives of children.

The photos that accompany this article are a sampling of the children the NSNU has sponsored. We hope that they and their families have benefitted from the small contributions the Nurses' Union has made to Plan.





# Scholarship Program 2017

**OPEN: APRIL 1, 2017**

Johnson Inc. is proud to offer **50 scholarships, valued at \$1000 each**, to students completing high school in 2017 and starting post-secondary education in the fall.

**Application Deadline: August 31, 2017**

For eligibility criteria visit [\*\*johnson.ca/scholarship\*\*](http://johnson.ca/scholarship)

[\*\*scholarshipfund@johnson.ca\*\*](mailto:scholarshipfund@johnson.ca)  
**1-866-544-2673**

**JOHNSON** 

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.

# In the Next Issue of What's **NU**?

CFNU Biennium  
*Speak Up* Summary

Fall Calendar  
A Look Ahead at a Busy Autumn

Special Feature



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