
The Part-Time Times

A newsletter for Ontario community college part-time employees and friends

Summer events get great response

Part-timers' concerns ring a bell with workers far beyond the college system

Maybe you've seen them at the Riverdale Farmers' Market in Toronto. Or the Blueberry Festival in Sudbury. Or the Mariposa Folk Festival in Orillia.

Maybe you're planning to stop by the Guelph Farmers' Market this Sunday. Or the Lakefield Fair this weekend. Or the Super-Ex in

Ottawa Aug. 7-17.

If you attend any cultural events at all in Ontario this summer, there's a good chance you'll bump into one of 13 college part-timers who are working as full-time mobilizers for the "I believe in FAIRNESS" in support of

part-time college workers.

They're staffing display booths, hosting letter-writing picnics, asking people to sign postcards, and lobbying local MPPs.

Feedback from the public has been very positive, says Candy Lindsay, the mobilizer in Peterborough.

"Public response is really good," Lindsay said. "I was at a small festival last weekend and I had a lot of people coming to me and supporting us, including people from other unions.

"I'm getting a lot of people talking about part-time workers in general. They're interested because of what they're going through themselves, having to work two or three jobs, so their family is being affected, and their health care is being affected because they have no benefits."

Women seem keenest to talk about part-time work, she said.

"A lot of women are affected by the whole issue of part-time work. This is a big women's issue."

To contact the mobilizer in your area, please e-mail blinds@opseu.org.

Bentley still doesn't care

No plans to let part-timers unionize, Minister says

Why vote Liberal?

It's a question on the minds of many college part-timers as the McGuinty government continues to assert that part-timers don't deserve the legal right to join a union.

It doesn't matter that college part-timers in every other province in Canada can unionize.

It doesn't matter that school board and education workers in Ontario can unionize.

It doesn't matter that college part-timers are being mistreated and exploited on a daily basis.

"The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities has no

plan to review the *Colleges Collective Bargaining Act* at this time," minister Chris Bentley said in a recent letter to a Scarborough resident.

The letter (see page 3 for the full text) reveals a Minister who believes college part-timers are simply too thick to understand the noble purpose behind their second-class status.

He shouldn't be surprised if 16,000 part-timers also have trouble understanding why they should vote Liberal in 2007.

Tell your story!

Ontario's community colleges have devised a wide variety of ways to make life hard for part-time employees. The web site at www.collegeworkers.org will keep a running log of part-timers' stories. Send us your name, college, and contact information, and we'll post your story – anonymously – on the web.

It doesn't have to be long – it can be one sentence if you like. Just tell other part-timers what has happened to you. It doesn't even have to be a "story." Just tell us how you feel. Send your story to collegeworkers@opseu.org or call our hotline at 1-866-811-7274 or (416) 448-7433.

This is my story...

• **I'm so glad you are asking for, and publishing, our part-timer stories.** I have taught at an Ontario college for four years (in addition to teaching for a public school board and working as a restaurant server to supplement my wages while still accommodating the college's schedule). I have a B.A., a B.Ed., and an M.A., and all my end-of-term course evaluations have been excellent. I routinely get rave reviews and sincere thank-yous from my students, because like so many others I am a committed, enthusiastic, damned good teacher whose professional pride will not let her limit her working hours to her paid hours. You could apply most of the stories I've already read on your web site to my experience. If I told you one or two incidents in my college part-time experience, I would only be revealing the tip of the iceberg, so instead of sharing my many horror stories, I will tell you how I feel.

I feel alienated. I feel professionally isolated. I feel

repeatedly taken advantage of. I feel powerless. I feel very sorry for the students who really are cheated by the colleges' hiring practices. I feel extremely angry. I feel cynical. I am ready to leave the teaching profession, despite my conviction (shared by my friends, family, and colleagues) that I am meant to be a teacher.

Compare these feelings to how I felt when I graduated from my teaching degree: proud, optimistic, motivated, committed to my students and

colleagues, a potential part of a team with a great deal to contribute to my society. I was ready to lend my considerable talent and brains to make a difference in this world.

The current system is not the only reason I have changed, but it is certainly a major reason. Good work, Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities – you've really transformed my future, and the futures of all my potential students who will now never know me, since I am leaving.

Get your posters, postcards, lobby kits and coffee mugs!

New lobby kits, postcards, posters, and coffee mugs this summer feature the new "I believe in FAIRNESS" logo.

To get materials, contact collegeworkers@opseu.org or call our Campaign Hotline at 1-866-811-7274 or (416) 448-7443. The mugs cost \$2 each. OPSEU locals can order them (and pay for them through a deduction from their quarterly rebate) by completing the form at <http://www.opseu.org/caat/parttime/caatmugorderform.pdf> and fax it in to Mary-Anne Di Adamo at (416) 443-1762.

To pick up "I believe in FAIRNESS" fridge magnets – they're free – visit your nearest OPSEU regional office.

Why second-class status is good enough for part-timers

by Chris Bentley, Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities

May 15, 2006

Dear (name withheld):

Mary Anne Chambers, MPP for Scarborough East, has forwarded to me your letter about the possibility of amending the *Colleges Collective Bargaining Act* to permit college part-time and sessional instructors to unionize. I am pleased to reply.

I note that an understanding of the complex and diverse role of Ontario's 24 active colleges of applied arts and technology is crucial to placing into context the exclusion of certain part-time academic and support staff from the bargaining regimes under the *Colleges Collective Bargaining Act* and the *Labour Relations Act*.

The Ontario Colleges of Applied arts and Technology Act, 2002 (the OCAAT Act), the legislation governing the colleges, provides that:

The objects of the colleges are to offer a comprehensive program of career-oriented, post-secondary education and training to assist individuals in finding and keeping employment, to meet the needs of employers and the changing work environment and to support the economic and social development of their local and diverse communities. [s.2(2)]

Accordingly, the colleges offer a broad range of degree, diploma, and certificate postsecondary education programs that are directed at providing state-of-the-art knowledge and skills, enabling graduates to be employed in increasingly complex and rapidly changing workplaces. Additionally, they enter into partnerships with business, industry, and other educational institutions, provide adult vocational education and training, basic skills and literacy training, apprenticeship in-school training and applied research [s.2(3) of the OCAAT Act]. Programs are offered on a full-time and part-time basis. As well, adult continuing education is a significant and vital element of college services to their communities.

I appreciate your concern about this issue; however, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities has no plan to review the *Colleges Collective Bargaining Act* at this time.

Thank you for bringing forward your thoughts on this issue.

Sincerely,

Christopher Bentley
Minister