

The Part-Time Times

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

Card-signing drive is “best thing possible” for colleges: Couvrette

“Good managers support our campaign,” OPSECAAT chair says

The OPSEU drive to win union representation for part-timers and sessionals is the “best thing possible” for Ontario’s community colleges, says the chair of the Organization of Part-Time and Sessional Employees of the Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology (OPSECAAT).

“Improving the working lives of college workers is not just about the workers,” says Roger Couvrette. “It’s also about the students and college managers who care about quality education.”

Low wages, a lack of benefits, and insecure jobs mean that many college part-timers and sessionals don’t stick around for long, Couvrette said.

“Last week at Algonquin College in Ottawa, where I used to teach, a college administrator told me that he had just had seven professors resign,” he said. “He now has 23 courses that don’t have a teacher.

“His message to me was, ‘Hurry up and get a union in here so we can start tackling some of these problems.’”

The vast majority of college administrators realize that the current situation is not good for quality education and not sustainable in the long run, says Couvrette.

“When we published *Compromising Quality*, our report on college education in Ontario, it was obvious that poor jobs in every part of every college – faculty and support – were having a negative impact on students’ education,” Couvrette said.

“I know there are a few college administrators out there who are trying to persuade workers not to sign a card, but it’s not a high number,” he said. “Good managers support our campaign.”

Now you can FAX us your membership card

College part-timers and sessionals who want to join OPSEU but haven’t yet been in touch with a union organizer can now FAX in their membership application. Here’s how:

1. Visit the OPSEU web site at www.collegeworkers.org. Click on the button that says “Join now.”
2. Print out the form, fill in the information, and fax it to the number provided.
3. A member of the OPSEU organizing staff will phone you to verify your signature.

Visitors to the web site can also order their free “It’s time!” desk clock on line.

The rubber hits the road....

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In the driver's seat: OPSECAAT Chair Roger Couvrette (right), with Vice-Chair Candy Lindsay.

The rubber hits the road

“It’s time!” bus kicks off tour of province

The OPSEU campaign bus is hitting the road. In the weeks ahead, the blue bus with the groovy look will be touring the province and may just stop at every community college.

Chief bus driver Roger Couvrette, chair of the organization of part-timers and sessionals, says the bus is ideal for helping workers sign OPSEU union cards.

“It’s just one more way to raise the profile of our campaign,” he said. “I’m going to be witnessing a lot of signatures in the weeks ahead. Meet me at the back of the blue bus.”

The bus visited Sheridan College in Oakville on Wednesday and went to Centennial College in Toronto yesterday.



The Part-Time Times is authorized for distribution by Roger Couvrette, president of the Organization of Part-Time and Sessional Employees of the Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology (OPSECAAT), and Warren (Smokey) Thomas, president of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU).