



Developmentally Speaking

Winter, 2004

Pay equity for us? Or not?

Approximately two years ago, five unions joined together and launched the Charter Challenge against the Provincial Government. The intent was to get the Provincial Government to pay out the money for Pay Equity that was promised to thousands of women in Ontario.

During this time, the Government decided to give agencies that supported Developmentally Challenged Individuals an increase in funding, called Revitalization Dollars to boost pay rates, benefits and increase money for training.

When they finally sent the money to the Agencies, they suddenly added that the money must be used to fulfill legal obligations. So, many Agencies gave this money to their staff and said it was Pay Equity money.

In the meantime, the five Unions negotiated with the Government and \$414 million dollars was allocated to pay out their pay equity obligation.

Now, we are being told that maybe those agencies that used the revitalization money to fulfill their legal obligations won't get any of the \$414 million dollars.

IS THIS FAIR? The original intent of the revitalization dollars was never to be used for Pay Equity.

I am particularly upset about this notion, as I was the person that signed the affidavit on behalf of OPSEU, and now I may not see any of this money.

Did the Government just pull off another big

scam? We fought for this money, so somehow we must get our share of the \$414 million.

Have any of you received this money yet?

In solidarity

Mary Kelly,

President Local 235

Communications Chair

My how we've grown

The first Developmental Services Sector I attended many years ago, there were only six units in attendance. In June, 2003, we had participation from 40 units.

I would like to welcome new members to our executive: Grace Mungal, Local 251, vice-chair of ACL and Mary Kelly, Local 235, chair of the communications committee.

The DSS executive met in November and December, working on the direction set at the Divisional meeting in June. We hope to see you all at Convention where we will report on our progress. If you want copies of executive minutes, please email bsuddaby@cogeco.ca. You can reach me at swalker@mountaincable.net or (home) 905-574-7445 or (cell) 289-260-5919.

Sue Walker,

Chair DSS

Authorized for distribution:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Leah Casselman'.

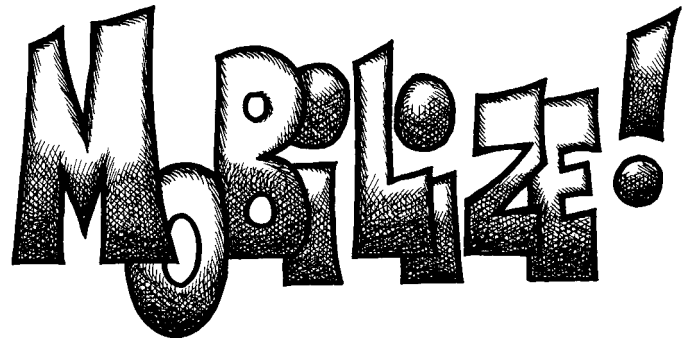
Leah Casselman, President

Mobilizing your members

As the local President of a Community Living, I face what I believe the majority of local leaders of Community Living often face: (1) a membership that is spread out over a variety of worksites and tends to be unengaged with the Union and (2) a Local Union with little credibility to the majority of its members and to the employer.

We, as a new Local Executive Committee, made a conscious decision to change this environment. Our major focus became communicating with our membership and policing our Collective Agreement. Using a variety of tools such as a monthly newsletter, general membership meetings, phone calls to every member of our local and word of mouth, we slowly started the process of building our local from scratch. We faced many stumbling blocks throughout this journey that saw what also happens too often to local leaders: Burnout.

Burnout often occurs because we as leaders often try to accomplish our work in isolation from the rest of OPSEU. This isolation does not have to be a reality if we take the initiative and utilize the services provided by OPSEU. As a local, we started to attend educationals, trainings, conventions. We became connected. We started to make the services within OPSEU work for us. Becoming connected with the larger OPSEU was not part of our initial plan, but in retrospect, it should have been. To other



ACLs I would stress that in order to build your locals and avoid burnout, it is essential that you have access to the support, knowledge, and experience of other OPSEU members.

Recently, our employer took his full-time employees on Professional Developmental Days at Blue Mountain (Collingwood). The Developmental Services Sector Executive was right there to support our local by scheduling their Executive Meeting at the same venue as the employer and they were right there supporting our Local's effort in running a hospitality suite for our members. This coordinated effort between a Local and a Sector, is available to all Locals. We as Local leaders, however, must recognize that part of the responsibility of seeking out this support is shared by us.

Grace Mungal

President Local 251

Vice-Chair ACL

Sector Dues are due

By Brock Suddaby

On behalf of the Sector Executive, I would like remind everyone that the dues for the Developmental Services Sector are due in January for the 2004 year.

The dues structure is as follows: Units with 100 or more members \$100.00: Units with fewer than 100 members \$50.00. If a unit finds this places them in undue hardship, they can appeal

to the Sector Executive for an exemption.

Dues may be paid by mailing a cheque to:
Developmental Services Sector,
c/o 1697 Creek Way,
Burlington, Ontario, L7L 6R5

If your local/unit has not paid its sector dues, your delegates at the BPS Conference and Sector meetings will have voice, but NO VOTE.

New sector health and safety course

During previous Developmental Service Sector meetings Health and Safety was identified as one the major concerns of members in our line of work.

Such problems as working alone, diverse and remote work locations, violent clients, back injuries as well as other musculoskeletal injuries were identified.

As a result, Brock and I met with Lisa McCaskell from the Health and Safety Department at Head Office to develop a program specifically for our Sector. This course was presented at the BPS Conference and met with positive feedback. Brock co-facilitated with Lisa and I co-facilitated with Pat Honsberger.

We felt the course was successful and the sector thanks Lisa, Terry Aversa, and Pat as well as Ruth Hamilton for all the support.

I have been helping out Linda Kernohan from OPSEU's organizing department in attempting to

organize some non-unionized DSS Agencies.

It is quite apparent that they also have similar Health and Safety concerns. Without the education and resources that OPSEU provides these employees are really put at risk by their employers.

Some have no WSIB coverage and some injuries are not considered compensable unless they are the direct result of an acting out client.

Violet Stringer

Chair Health and Safety

Developmental Services Sector

New video:

There is a new video featuring OPSEU member Mary Long, whose husband died in an industrial accident. The 14-minute film is an excellent motivator for Health and Safety.

If you would like to borrow it, call your regional office.

I would like to wish everyone a HAPPY NEW YEAR

As the Vice-Chair of Community Services, I would like to let everyone in Community Services know that they can reach me at melanieh@baytel.net

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me. If e-mail is not an option, please write to: 107 Huron Cres., Thunder Bay, Ont. P7A 3K3.

I would really like to know what is happening in this area. I will be contacting every local that I have a contact number for in January. If I do not contact you, please contact me, or contact me anyway!!! I would like to start a phone tree or e-mail tree, to pass information along, ideas, and to help each other out.

Talk to you soon,

Melanie Hamilton,

Vice-Chair Community Services (Sector 2B)

Developmental Services is looking for a logo. Prize for the winner.

We are running a logo contest. We want a logo of our own!

There will be a prize for the winner, who will be announced at Convention. The Executive will choose the winning logo.

The deadline for all entries will be April 1, 2004.

The logo must include the words "developmental services." It will be used for pins, T-shirts, letterhead, buttons, etc.

It must have as few colours as possible, no more than four.

To enter, you must be part of Developmental Services and an OPSEU member.

All entries can be submitted to Melanie Hamilton at melanieh@baytel.net.

Fax number 807-343-7954.

107 Huron Cres.

Thunder Bay, ON

P7A 3K3