

Statement by Candy Lindsay

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In his book by the same name, Joseph Heller defined a “Catch-22” this way: “They can do anything to you that you can’t stop them from doing.” Here is an e-mail that we received that demonstrates the Catch-22 that we all face as part-time college workers and illustrates the points that Roger has just made:

“I am no longer with the college. The position I was doing for 20 months came up for full time status. I applied, got an interview but was told I fell short of several other candidates. I wish I had been in the union so maybe I could have fought the decision. I cannot understand how I could have been good enough to do the job part-time for almost two years but not good enough for the full-time position. I believe it may have been filled by someone the manager knows. I cannot say for sure but I have a feeling that it was. My boss is not known for promoting from within. I thought you might be able to use this as an example of why part-time employees should be in the union. We are getting screwed and cannot do anything about it. I am now out of a job that I loved and everyone in the office was shocked that I did not get it.”

This part-time college worker had absolutely no job security and was the victim of an arbitrary decision. There is no process for her to grieve, to protest what is probably an unjust decision. She did that job for 20 months for a fraction of what her replacement will be paid and she received no pay for statutory holidays or vacation pay. She did not receive benefits during her 20 months of service.

Is this fair? Not even close. But it is the kind of thing that part-time college workers live each and every day in community colleges across Ontario. It has to come to an end. It will come to an end: OPSECAAT will see to that. As Roger said, we will prevail.