

# The Part-Time Times

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



Photo: Ron Lavigne

## OPSEU contingent meets Minister Milloy

OPSEU president Warren (Smokey) Thomas led an OPSEU delegation Feb. 28 to a morning meeting with John Milloy, Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities. The group discussed the process for getting union rights for college part-timers and sessionals and the steps needed to see them at the bargaining table as soon as possible. From left: Smokey Thomas; Betty Cree, Chair, CAAT-Support Division of OPSEU; Paddy Musson, Chair, CAAT-Academic Division of OPSEU; Minister Milloy; and Roger Couvrette, President of the provincial organization of part-timers and sessionals (OPSECAAT).



## AI's Steward's Challenge: Sign up your part-time and sessional co-workers!

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# Al's Steward's Challenge

Al Bennett started working at Centennial College on Dec. 2, 1969. A guy named Bill Davis was Minister of Education, and he had just opened Ontario's first college a few years before.

"In the beginning, they threw money at the college system," says Bennett, a steward with OPSEU Local 559 at Centennial's Centre for Creative Communication. "There was money for staff, for equipment, for anything the students needed. Now it's cutback, cutback, cutback."

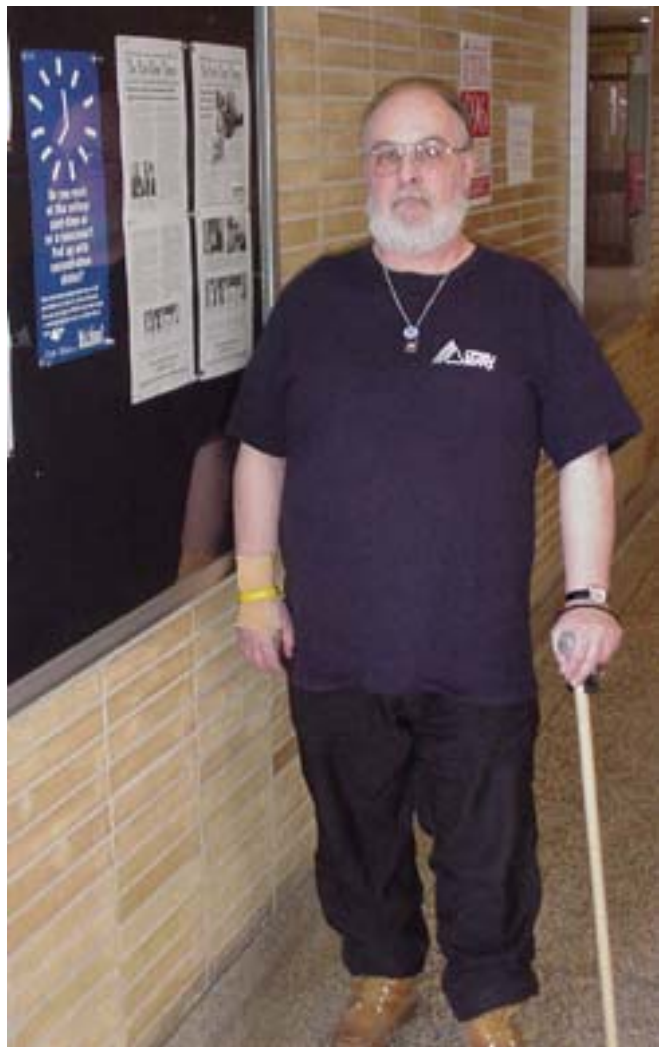
Bennett, a strong supporter of the campaign to win union rights for college part-timers, has already helped 10 co-workers sign union cards and is challenging all full-time OPSEU stewards – and members – to jump into the campaign with both feet.

"These people have been getting ripped off for so many years, and now's the time to help them," Bennett says. "They're at the mercy of the colleges."

"If everybody signs up two part-timers, we'll have them all," he says. "How hard could it be? I mean, everybody knows a part-timer."

"These are our co-workers, people we know," he said. "They deserve the benefit of a collective agreement."

Any OPSEU member can witness a card signature. To get membership application cards for your co-workers, just call 1-866-811-7274. For more information about the campaign in general, visit the web at [www.collegeworkers.org](http://www.collegeworkers.org).



"[Part-timers and sessionals] are our co-workers, people we know," says OPSEU Local 559 steward Al Bennett. "They deserve the benefit of a collective agreement."

## Steward stories wanted

As part of the Steward's Challenge, OPSEU is looking for stewards or members who have signed up five or more part-timers or sessionals. If you are such a person, please send an e-mail to OPSEU Senior Communications Officer Randy Robinson at [rrobinson@opseu.org](mailto:rrobinson@opseu.org). Please include your name, OPSEU local, college, number of cards signed, and a brief description of what you have been doing and what you're hearing from part-timers.



# Mid-term layoffs a break – from getting paid

*“We wish you a good week off,” Algonquin tells part-timers who get the boot*

The mid-term study break gives college students a chance to catch up on their studies and take a breather. But for many part-timers and college workers, it’s a different kind of break. It’s a break from getting paid.

“If part-timers didn’t have to buy groceries and pay bills during the study break, I suppose laying them off for a week would be acceptable,” says Roger Couvrette, president of the organization of part-time and sessional college workers (OPSECAAT). “As it is, these layoffs are just one more reason part-timers need a union.”

Not all part-timers are laid off during the study break. There is no set policy on layoff of part-time staff across the province, as each of the 24 colleges sets its own policies. Often, different departments of the same college have different policies.

Because of the obsolete rules of the *Colleges Collective Bargaining Act*, colleges are not required to pay part-timers and sessionals statutory holiday pay or vacation pay either – even though both are legal requirements under Ontario’s basic labour law, the *Employment Standards Act*.

“It’s not like part-timers who are laid off are getting a vacation,” Couvrette said Feb. 29 after a heated conversation with Algonquin College managers over the issue. “On this issue, as on all workplace issues, we need to be able to negotiate a common standard across the province that

takes the needs of part-timers and sessionals into account.”



**Above:** OPSECAAT President Roger Couvrette with Algonquin College part-timer Caron Fitzpatrick Feb. 29 beside a college memo advising laid-off part-timers to have “a good week off.” **Below:** Couvrette and Fitzpatrick at the same bulletin board Jan. 22, when they posted the Charter of Rights and Freedoms at a media event to let the college know that college workers have a right to talk to each other.



For full information about the OPSEU drive to win union rights for part-timers and sessionals at Ontario’s community colleges, just visit or call!

[www.collegeworkers.org](http://www.collegeworkers.org)  
**1-866-811-7274**

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).