



Ontario Disability Support Plan update

BY RON STRONG

We have had a couple of meetings since our divisionals, and our two new members have fit right in. It is not easy to step in on the subcommittee but Stuart McInnes and Cindy Hayes-Wright have risen to the challenge. Please welcome them to the subcommittee.

Cindy, a client service representative in the Peterborough office, has worked 20 years in the ministry and has seen many changes since she started back at Muskoka Centre. She is new vice-president of Local 308 and secretary/treasurer of the ODSP occupational group.

Stuart, an income support specialist working in the Brantford office, has 29 years in the ministry, starting in 1978 when he was a chef at Oxford Regional Centre. Stuart is on both the local and regional LERC/RERC, is president of Local 219 and is member at large of the ODSP occupational group.

Thanks are due to Carolle Hamilton and Pam Smith for all of the hours of hard work and dedication that they brought to the subcommittee.

ODSP is an exciting place to be right now with the implementation of Professional Advancement and Career Education (PACE), which officially kicked off Tues. March 27, 2007. Sister Pam Smith came up with the winning name and was very instrumental in the development of the joint training. This training will take place over the next two years and will involve everyone working in ODSP.

This is only one of the action items under Schedule A of the joint memorandum of agreement. The training has been test piloted in North Bay and now consists of four modules. This training will be launched at different times throughout the next couple of years, so watch for it in your office. We have heard nothing but good things about it.



We are looking for interested members to assist us with the publishing of our news letter.

Please submit any articles to roxanne_barnes@hotmail.com for our next issue. Please send in your ideas of what you might want to see in our newsletter.

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Developmental Services Report

BY ELIZABETH DAUBNEY

The Developmental Services occupational group passed by-laws and updated each other on events in our locals. We held our elections for our MERC representative and the Developmental Services Occupational Committee (DSOC) results are as follows:

**DS MERC representative:
Elizabeth Daubney**

Elizabeth was re-elected for a second term. She joined the OPS in 1978 in Picton at Prince Edward Heights and has been an activist in her local for more than 25 years, holding every local executive committee position except treasurer. Elizabeth is a certified health and safety member, co-chair of LERC and joint health and safety committees, and was worksite representative through the two OPS strikes.

DSOC Chair: David Chew, Local 323 Huronia Regional Centre

David brings many years of experience as a COMSOC MERC team member, bargaining team member (IHC), Executive Board member, Co Chair of JIBRC and several local executive positions to this committee.

Vice Chair: Liz Smith, Local 323, Huronia Regional Centre

Liz is chief steward in her local and has also held the vice-president's position. She has been employed as a residential counsellor since 1989, was surplussed in 1999 and worked in the community for two years before returning to the OPS in 2001. Liz has recently completed the Workers Health and Safety Centre instructor's training course.

Secretary/Treasurer: Maria Doef, Local 436, Rideau Regional Centre

Maria has been an OPSEU activist for 27 years. She is the vice-president in her local, and has been on the joint health

and safety committee 15 years. Maria has also served as local president and was a MERC team member for nine years. She was instrumental in the establishment of a work site child care centre at Rideau Regional, now in its 23rd year.

Member at Large: Greg Bondy, Local 126, Southwest Regional Centre.

Greg has worked at Southwest Regional Centre for 25 years after four years at Oxford Regional Centre. Greg is chief steward in his local and has been involved in health and safety for 22 years. He is co-chair of the local health and safety committee. Greg has also been an active member of the Disability Caucus.

Please join me in welcoming the new DSOC members.

Message from the MERC Chair:

I would like to wish everyone a safe and happy summer. I would like to thank everyone for their commitment to unionism, their locals and their workplace. Not often enough do we take the time to appreciate the work that our members do. Without you in the local we would not be able to get our work accomplished. We are looking for articles for our next newsletter which we

are hoping to get out June or July 2007. Please forward them to me at roxanne_barnes@hotmail.com Thank you.

*In Solidarity,
Roxanne Barnes
MERC Chair*

New representative from FRO/DAU/SBT occupational group on MERC

BY SHAWN LAVERY

Let me introduce myself. I may be new to the MERC, but I am not new to OPSEU. I work as a finance and reconciliation officer at the Family Responsibility Office, and am in Local 542. Since June 2005, I have been acting co-coordinator, financial analysis and reconciliation.

I started in the OPS in 1985 with the Residential Tenancy Commission in Ottawa. After

a brief stint in the private sector I returned to the OPS in 1989 and have worked for the Ministry of Transportation, Housing, Management Board Secretariat, Attorney General and the Ministry of Community and Social Services.

I have been a steward since the mid 1990s, have served on our LERC since 1998 and was co-chair 1994 -1996. I have been the local treasurer since 2002.

At our divisional meetings in Nov. 2006 there were only three delegates from our occupational group and I was acclaimed as the MERC representative. Over the next two years I will represent the members at the within this occupational group. With the assistance of this group I will work to establish by-laws and hope to establish an executive at the next meeting. Members can contact me at shawnlavery@iname.com

Chair's Notes

BY ROXANNE BARNES

Scent-free workplace policy

Although it is not an OPS Policy, Joint local health and safety committees have worked to resolve local issues when staff in the workplace have suffered allergic reactions to fragrances, severe enough to cause distress and force them to leave the workplace. Many people are becoming more sensitive to scents. This is a friendly reminder from your MERC team to please refrain from applying and replenishing perfume and other fragrant products in the workplace. Please take a part in making our workplace an environment that is suitable and healthy for all.

Interest-based problem solving

We recently tried the method of Interest Based Problem Solving to try and resolve a grievance in our Windsor ODSP office. I am proud to report that it was a success. We came to a joint resolution that we hope will improve the health and safety of our members and continue to provide excellent customer service to our clients. I would like to send a special thank you to Jackie McVeigh from the Ministry of Labour for facilitating the meeting.

Bullying in the workplace

Bullying is becoming more apparent in our workplaces. We do not at all condone this type of behaviour. Over the past few months a joint union and

management committee, in the Hamilton/Niagara Region met, along with a consultant, and developed a paper on bullying in the workplace. This paper will be attached to the standards of conduct. There will be training for both union and management on bullying in the workplace. This paper is only for the Hamilton and Niagara Region. This is something that all regions should seriously consider developing.



Authorized for distribution:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Warren Thomas".

Warren (Smokey) Thomas, *President*