

IRCC Report National Executive meeting (Fall 2018)

The PSAC Convention was exciting with sister Fabienne Jean-Francois have made a bid to run for the position of National President. A fantastic campaign with emotions running deep. The poise and intelligent responses to questions were only part of the fantastic campaign, sister Fabienne was able to get herself out to the membership at convention and I can predict that this story is just beginning.

There were many battles with management in relation to Duty to Accommodate and CPC Vegreville being forcibly shut down by the Government. Crazy times called for action and action was provided. CEIU and PSAC went to the PSLREB in relation to CPC Vegreville and was victorious, now waiting for the action that was mandated within 60 days by the Board. The campaign for CPC Vegreville was unlike any campaign ever seen by CEIU and PSAC. Most of the feelings of pride must go to the work put into this action by Michelle Henderson (our own NVP Alberta, NWT and Nunavut). Very proud of your actions Michelle...amazing!

The irregular movement of peoples into Canada through the Refugee stream had a fever pitch and was continuous throughout the year. Many of our coworkers worked on the special programs to deal with the aftermath of the Syria project and then the actions of the Government of the USA fall out which has resulted with refugees fearful of being deported to countries they fear living in and cannot return too. These programs are ongoing and contingency plans have been put in place for unforeseen circumstances being expected in the years to come. The budget and employee compliment is to be increased with staffing levels going up even more dramatically over the next year or two. Be assured that discussion on staffing levels and "A based funding" and "B Based funding" are constantly part of the discussion with A-based funding being dramatically increased.

IN the mean time we have seen issues relating to Mental Health in the workplace being tackled but not as rigorously as our Union would like. It is inappropriate that

people dealing with members with Mental Health issues assist these members without having had training on language and process. Hence there is now talk on staff possibly being considered for training in this aspect of our daily life.

The apparent policy of staff working with clients on the phone being told to simply hang up when confronted with a “suicidal caller” is simply inappropriate but also uncaring and just not the way we see IRCC dealing with our clients. We have requested a taskforce to be created to look into how other Departments (not the least of which CBSA and HRSDC/Service Canada) deal with suicidal callers/clients. Closing the doors on clients we must be able to give the clients being shut out with the means to get answers to their requests for information. To that end at the last NLMCC meeting I made quite clear that our Call Centre is the voice and “open door” to the clients to obtain their information or updates. The Call center has never been staffed at proper levels even when the Government has been increasing numbers of new immigrants. It is reaching a breaking point and this was acknowledged by the management present at the NLMCC meeting.

Phoenix is at this point not going away even though the actual numbers of cases is going down the repeat issues are in many ways too much to bear. The Office of Conflict resolution has also mentioned that a lot of anxiety is felt due to Phoenix with 17% of EX having made claims through the OCR (Office of Conflict Resolution) the PM and CR groups account for 53% of cases. To replace the Phoenix program with another program will take anywhere from 4 to 6 years by most estimates.

Our very own Catherine Legan resigned as A/NVP IRCC as Catherine was working at CPC Vegreville and her old job in elder care became available for her to take. With the closure looming of CPC Vegreville and the impending move to CPC Edmonton, she decided to go to the Province to take her old job back. Catherine was a real asset to our organization and in her role as A/NVP IRCC. She will be greatly missed. On a positive note Helen King from CPC Sydney was the successful

candidate to replace Catherine as A/NVP IRCC. Glad to have you at the National table Helen and looking forward to working with you on the many issues at hand.

I cannot tell you enough times on how proud I am to be the NVP IRCC and be able to try to make life at IRCC as best as is possible. This last few months have been stressful and exciting as always and of course as usual. It is always a joy to represent our members and it has been my passion for many years. If ever you need to contact me, please do. My Email and phone number (cell phone) are below. Always available to assist or give direction on how best to solve issues.

In Solidarity and respectfully submitted,

“PCC”

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NVP IRCC

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