



Fall 2018

The Front Line

Standing Up & Standing Strong

EXPANDED EDITION

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SEIUWEST.ca

SEIU-West represents over 13,000 members across Saskatchewan who work in health care, education, municipalities, CBOs and various industries. We work to improve the lives of working people and their families and lead the way to a more just and humane society.

2019 Pocket Calendars!



Coming Soon!

HEALTH CARE RESTRUCTURING: WHERE'S THE FRONT LINE PERSPECTIVE?

By Shawna Colpitts, Director of Political Action & Education

Always listen to the front line. That's what history and common sense teach us about how to provide quality health care in Saskatchewan. Unfortunately, Health Minister Jim Reiter has been ignoring this lesson, and slighting our front line health care workers in the process.

In January Mr. Reiter promised to participate in a 'Walk-A-Day in My Shoes' job shadowing opportunity. Since then, despite repeated requests and reminders from SEIU-West, Mr. Reiter has not kept his promise, and has avoided other opportunities to experience front line perspectives.

He nevertheless managed to find time recently for an interview with the Regina Leader-Post about the progress of health system restructuring. When asked to name the biggest positive achievement of this process, he mentioned "senior management recruitment", and said "As far as things not going well, there isn't one thing that jumps out at me."

Over the last 18 months of "transformational change" (TC) in health care, our members have witnessed many troubling trends. Instead of collaborating with them and their union representatives, the Ministry and the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) seem to prefer issuing

unilateral decisions.

This slight to our members is very puzzling when you consider the millions that have been invested in Lean training in this sector. A key principle of Lean is that management should listen to front line workers for practical and workable improvements.

Whether it is the provincial security review, the transfer of Information Services to E-health, or the further privatization of MRI services, our members' practical experience and suggestions are not being heard, and the partnerships of the past are being dismantled.

The Ministry and SHA claim that TC saves money, but fail to mention expenses like severance packages for former CEOs, and ignore the costs that come from disrespectful, non-collegial labour relations.

The employer representatives we routinely meet with regarding workplace issues seem to be preoccupied with reapplying for their own jobs in "efficiency" competitions. Will this mean another round of severance payments, leaving behind only the employer reps most fiercely committed to a unilateral approach to TC and labour relations?

Health care providers have been through all of this before in health care restructuring. Are we repeating past mistakes as a deliberate effort? Or is it that they just cannot learn from our history?



SEIU-West Scholarship Applications are due November 15, 2018!
Visit seiuwest.ca for more information.

CAPE'S CORNER

For many, Labour Day is just the last long weekend of summer, enjoyed with little understanding of its origin or relevance. For activists within the labour movement, however, Labour Day is an important opportunity to educate the public about the many workplace protections and benefits they enjoy because of the good work of labour unions; like the 40 hour work week, maternity leave, worker's compensation benefits, and workplace safety standards.

In my experience as the President of SEIU-West, I have enjoyed many face to face conversations with our members. Some have come to the workplace and inherited their union, while others have fought tirelessly to organize their union in their workplace. These conversations have taught me that our members are the experts. Whether they work in crisis support, health care, education support, community based organizations or addictions recovery, our members share – a constant desire to improve the services they provide in order to make their community better for everyone.

At SEIU-West, we share this perspective. We want to build partnerships to improve the many communities where our members work and live. We offer a network of opportunities to our members; pathways for them to learn, participate and engage. We know that enhancing the involvement of our members in our union enriches both workplace and community health. We do this work because we want the public to better understand the critical role unions play within our society. We have a shared interest in the protection of quality democracy. We believe in and will champion a fair society.

Politically, there has long been an agenda to weaken the role of unions. Driven by the self-interest of the rich and powerful, this ideology attempts to undermine unions' work on behalf of our members; to under-value the efforts to address social justice issues and create balance in the power dynamic between workers and their bosses. Unions believe that by educating the public and dispelling the myths surrounding our organizations, we can build stronger and better alliances that benefit not just our members, but all working people.

As a consequence, we take a great deal of pride in the celebration of Labour Day and we share with our many members, an energetic interest in strengthening their participation and motivating their engagement whether it be at Labour Day events or the many other opportunities that will build a better and more equal society in our future.



By: Barbara Cape
President, SEIU-West

Upcoming Events

Oct.	Healthy Workplace Month	Nov.	Nutrition Month
Oct.	Women's History Month	Nov. 2	Stewards in Action Level II- MJ and SC
Oct. 1	International Day for Older Persons	Nov. 5 – 11	Medical Radiation Technology week
Oct. 1 – 7	Food Services Week	Nov. 6	Community Worker Appreciation Day
Oct. 3 – 4	SEIU-West Leadership Conference	Nov. 6 – 7	CBO Conference – Saskatoon
Oct. 8 – 14	Health Care Security and Safety Week	Nov. 11	Remembrance Day
Oct. 10	World Mental Health Day	Nov. 12 – 18	National Addiction Awareness Week
Oct. 10 – 11	Turtle Island Course - Saskatoon	Nov. 14	Stewards in Action Level II - Saskatoon
Oct. 13	World Hospice and Palliative Care Day	Nov. 15	SEIU-West Scholarship Applications Due
Oct. 14 – 20	Education Week	Nov. 20	National Child Day
Oct. 14 – 20	Facilities and Engineering Week	Nov. 27	Facing Management II (Saskatoon)
Oct. 14 – 20	Combined Lab & X-Ray Technologist Week	Nov. 28	Facing Management II (SC & MJ)
Oct. 15 – 21	Medical Device Reprocessing Week	Dec. 3	International Day of Persons with Disabilities
Oct. 15 – 21	YWCA Week without Violence	Dec. 6	National Day of Remembrance and Action and on Violence Against Women
Oct. 16	Pharmacy Technician Day	Dec. 10	Human Rights Day
Oct. 16 – 17	Stewards in Action Level I (Saskatoon)	Dec. 24	Christmas Eve
Oct. 18	Persons Day	Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Oct. 18 – 19	Stewards in Action Level I (MJ and SC)	Dec. 26	Boxing Day
Oct. 22 – 28	Health Care Providers Week	Dec. 31	New Year's Eve
Oct. 24 – 27	SFL Convention (Regina)		
Nov.	National Home Care Month		

For more detail on these and other events, contact your Unit Chair or visit the events calendar on SEIUWEST.CA

Did You Know?

You have the right to participate in the day to day detection, evaluation, and reduction of workplace hazards?

Under the *Saskatchewan Employment Act (SEA) – Part III Division 3, 4, and 5*, you have the right to participate in Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) matters in your workplace.

Worker representatives are elected by the unit. Worksites with 10 employees or less need an OH&S Representative but worksites with 10 or more employees are required to have an Occupational Health Committee (OHC).

The OHC is the process for the employer and employees to work together to resolve health and safety concerns because a workplace injury can be life changing.

If you are interested in serving on an OHC or becoming an OH&S Rep in your workplace take these steps:

- Contact your Unit Chair or call the SEIU-West Member Resource Centre (MRC) at 1.888.999.7348 and;
- Put your name forward during Unit election meetings, the timing of which to be determined by the Unit Executive and Union Representative – if elected, you will become a member of your worksite OHC or OH&S Rep.

Education Committee Expands Sponsorships

By Kelly Harrington, Deputy Director of Political Action & Education

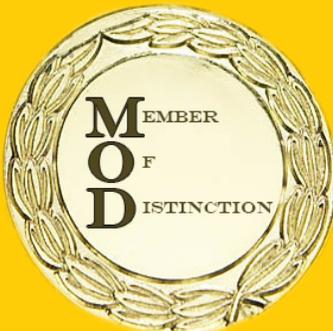
The SEIU-West Education committee was pleased to sponsor delegates to attend each of the following conferences this year:

- The Saskatchewan Association of Medical Radiology Technologists (SAMRT)
- The Saskatchewan Association of Medical Laboratory Technologists (SAMLTL)
- Saskatchewan Association of Combined Laboratory and X-ray Technicians (SACLXT)
- Pharmacy Association of Saskatchewan (PAS)

The application process for these types of conferences are sent to each unit, posted on our website (seiuwest.ca) and promoted through our Facebook page (fb.com/seiuwest).

Our committee covers conference registration fees, lost wages, travel costs, parking, hotel and meal expenses for those lucky union members selected to attend. All applicants have been notified and we look forward to their written reports on these important conferences.

Like SEIU-West on FB so you see opportunities like these in your news feed.



MOD Fall 2018

Sylvia Humeniuk

SEIU-West is pleased to announce that our Member of Distinction for our fall edition of the Front Line is Sylvia Humeniuk. For some time now, SEIU-West members have led meetings with their MLAs. As it turns out, Sylvia's MLA is Scott Moe – Premier of Saskatchewan. By herself, Sylvia faced Premier Scott Moe in a meeting, where she discussed important issues within health care pertaining to LPNs. We applaud Sylvia's courage to meet with the Premier on her own. Sylvia is a mother of two beautiful daughters and Baba to her two precious granddaughters. She lives in Rosthern and has been an LPN for 35 years and is currently employed at Goodwill Manor. Sylvia took the initiative to show support for her SEIU-West co-workers and contacted her MLA! On June 21st, she had the opportunity to meet with the MLA of Rosthern constituency – Scott Moe. The Premier was very personable and Sylvia believes that he took interest in what they were discussing. Sylvia shared her observation that there is no mention of LPNs in *The Personal Care Homes Act*. Premier Scott Moe promised that he will look into the wording of this Act regarding RNs and RPNs leading the work force. Sylvia also discussed having legislation to ensure LPNs are used to their full scope. In this short meeting, Sylvia also discussed the fact that health services providers will not accept any rollbacks and that our benefits should not be cut in any way. Sylvia also conveyed that our contract needs to be settled soon. Knowing that Sylvia had only 30 minutes with the Premier, she did a great job by expressing many concerns.

Most importantly, Sylvia encourages others to step up: "I really do encourage all members to contact their MLA in some fashion. We need to make our voices heard!"

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Sylvia and our Premier

Member Story: Humboldt Strong

By Teegan Hunter, Security Officer

I've been a Security Officer for the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) since September 2017. Our team handles over 1,000 calls a month at the four Saskatoon facilities where we're stationed—including more than 700 calls a month at Royal University Hospital (RUH).

Being a Security Officer in the health care sector has many rewards and challenges. Each day brings new and different situations, and you have to adjust the services you provide while always remaining positive.

April 6th, 2018 changed the lives of many forever. The Humboldt Broncos tragedy impacted families, communities, the health sector, and the entire hockey world. Here is my story about my experiences as a Security Officer during this very difficult time.

I was first notified about the bus crash on the evening of April 6th. My heart instantly fell ill as I learned of the seriousness of the accident and the extent of the casualties. I didn't know what to think—all I wanted to do was help. The next morning I arrived at RUH for my scheduled 7:00 shift. The emotion lay heavy in that large building. Green and yellow displays of support had already begun forming in the hallways.

While sitting at our post in the Emergency Department I saw a young man with blonde hair—one of the players—visibly injured but up and walking. He walked over to use the phone, and seeing me looking at him he did something which would change my entire day: he smiled.

I thought to myself – how unbelievable, how are you smiling on a day like today? This small gesture was one of the first of many signs I saw of what a remarkable hockey organization the Humboldt Broncos are.

Around this time, local support began pouring in. The Saskatoon Police Chief, Troy Cooper, and some of his fellow officers arrived in full uniform to pay their respects. I thanked them, shook their hands and took them back to our ICU waiting area. The reality of what had happened was really starting to become clear.

Very quickly, the media presence in and around the facility grew. This was challenging, because the SHA takes patient confidentiality and safety very seriously. I became stationed in the hallway outside our Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and Coronary Care Unit (CCU). My original duty was

to ensure that families, friends, players, and organization staff had privacy during this very raw and difficult time. However, my duties very quickly widened as I began to spend time with these families and loved ones.

In the first week after the accident I handed out thousands of visitor tags—there were people everywhere. Donations and messages began pouring in from all over the country and beyond: food, gifts, gift cards, and notes from anonymous people offering to help however they could. The world was starting to come together. We were visited by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and his team, players and representatives from numerous NHL teams, Don Cherry and Ron McLean, Hayley Wickenheiser, and singer Paul Brandt. Their support truly brightened everyone's day.

My days quickly changed from being in a rotation with my team to immersing myself for 12-14 hours a day with the affected families. As I met more friends, hugged more billets, and held more parents I just naturally became very protective of everyone down there. I feel so honoured and blessed to have been able to offer my services to these amazing, strong individuals. These people, who were living through the worst moments of their lives, who may have lost a loved one, often asked me how I was doing, if I was doing okay. This shows just the type of people the Broncos community are. I received a Humboldt Broncos bunny hug and a hockey stick from one of the player's parents. I will never forget that nor will I ever part with them. That stick is on the bench with my hockey team at every game and hangs in our dressing room. As I sit and write this,

almost five months after the tragedy, it still brings tears to my eyes. I cannot begin to explain how truly thankful I am to have met every single one of these people.

Doing my job in the midst of this tragedy was the hardest thing I have ever had to do, but these have been the most rewarding moments of my life.

Growing up as an athlete, playing competitive hockey for 18 years as well as American college softball, this tragedy rocked me to my core. Your team is your everything. Your fans, your families, your billets – it's one big, tight knit family and you build those core team relationships on your travel bus. In 2012, I experienced an accident in Nebraska when our sister school bus was broad sided. This



experience was something I leaned on mentally to help me adjust accordingly and attempt to give these Broncos' families, billets, players and friends a little extra effort in finding out what they needed.

There are so many people I want to salute and thank for the vital roles they played during this crisis:

- the families, friends, billets and players for allowing me to go on this journey with them and trust me to stand tall for them. You have changed my life and I will forever hold the Broncos in my heart.
- Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and everyone who came to show their support. I saw firsthand how much your support and positivity meant to everyone. A glimmer of hope shone every time a visitor arrived.
- the elementary schools who wrote prayers or made wreaths for each player. As the one delivering them, I saw the bright and thankful smiles these gifts brought.
- the people who provided spiritual support. You made



yourselves and your prayers available to everyone without forcing yourselves on anyone.

- the makers of the Broncos blankets. I can tell you the staff all enjoy them and it's very comforting to be wrapped up in one.
- the medical staff, who provided consistently excellent care when faced with stress and emotion like they had never seen before

• EMS, STARS and first responders at the scene: you saved many lives due to great training, teamwork, and compassion.

• And last, to my fellow security officers, for offering your hand out in support to me during this time.

Knowing I had a team I could talk to and lean on if needed meant a lot to me. People ask, how do you add to the health care team? I have always known our value, but now I know in my heart, that as security, in times of crisis and tragedy we are willing and able to meet the challenge. We are all Bronco strong!

Essential Pieces of Our Public Health Care Team

By Tom Howe, Member Action Coordinator

Health Care sector bargaining continues to be a struggle. But our members are taking action in various ways to ensure health care provider voices are heard by SAHO and the government.

Our SEIU-West Provincial Bargaining committee continues to keep members informed through face-to-face meetings across the province, Virtual Town Hall meetings, and ongoing bargaining updates on the SEIU-West website.

The ProCAT (Provincial Contract Action Team) have wrapped up another tour of our facilities within the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) to explain the many ways to support their bargaining committee, promote the 5 for 5 Contest and encourage members to get informed by signing up for updates.

SEIU-West members understand that if we want a fair wage increase and agreement, we need to pressure our government, as they are directing to SAHO. Our members have been calling, writing and meeting with their MLAs. Our contact list keeps growing so our members get immediate updates on bargaining. We love that our members "get it."

The Political Action and Awareness Committee (PAAC) have been interacting with our government as well as local business owners within rural communities. This effort is to educate the general public about the value of their health services and the effect upon local economies as cuts and

rollbacks hurt us all. The desire is to have others hold our elected officials accountable.

Members from Humboldt met with the Minister of Finance this past winter to ask her some hard questions. SEIU-West sent a follow up letter to her and didn't get a reply. We attempted another interaction with the Finance Minister in the spring when we dropped off approximately 1,500 postcards at her office. Unfortunately, she doesn't seem to "get it" as we still await her reply.

Other coinciding campaigns such as Security Services in our Care Environments, and 'Patient First' Requires Safe Staffing - our petition for safe staffing levels; and actions such as "Mourning the loss of public services" led by our Young Workers at Kinsmen Park will continue to be a priority.

Our Bargaining committee is reporting that they have no real confidence that this employer wants to reach a fair collective agreement. So this is going to take all of us.

We encourage all SEIU-West members from all sectors to help their brothers and sisters in health care achieve a fair collective agreement. You have a stake in this too. Your public health care system is at risk. You and your families rely on the services provided by our health care providers in your communities. We are Stronger Together!

To find out more about SAHO Bargaining, visit SEIUWEST.ca.



What is SEIU doing for Truth and Reconciliation?

By Kelly Harrington, Deputy Director of Political Action & Education

In 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada released the TRC's 94 Calls to Action in an attempt for reconciliation between Indigenous communities and settlers in Canada. SEIU-West is embracing the Calls to Action by educating our members.

Through our Turtle Island Training (offered in Saskatoon this October), our members will explore the history of Indigenous people in Canada and begin to understand the injustices of colonization.

In our 'Unionism 101' course, our session on TR gives participants an opportunity to send a letter to Honourable Tina Beaudry-Mellor – Minister of Advanced Education to urge our Government to implement Call to Action # 24 which calls "upon medical and nursing schools in Canada to require all students to take a course dealing with

Aboriginal health issues, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, and Indigenous teaching and practices. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights and anti-racism."

SEIU-West is honoured to partner once again with the Metis Addictions Council of Saskatchewan Inc. (MACSI – Saskatoon Centre) by co-sponsoring the 17th Annual Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disease – FASD Walk. We are proud of our MACSI members and the important work they do every day.

We also recognize important dates, such as Indigenous Heritage Day and encourage all members to attend ceremonies held across the province to honour, recognize and celebrate our Indigenous communities.



Community Story: Purple Province!

By Catherine Gendron, Project Coordinator

Your Union has been painting Saskatchewan purple through various sponsorships, events, and advertising campaigns.

Purple was proud to donate our SEIU-West BBQ tent and trailer for the Tree Planting Ceremony and BBQ in Saskatoon. Hundreds of people gathered to celebrate the success of the new askîy project site, a CHEP initiative that demonstrates urban agriculture by educating and empowering the Saskatoon community with the knowledge and skills to create a self-sustainable food economy in urban centres.

We sponsored Ice Cream Day for the Saskatoon and District Labour Council's (SDLC) Summer Snack Program! Our members participating in this day ensure communities in need not only get a nutritious lunch, but have a yummy cold treat as well!

SEIU-West volunteers and our trailer/BBQ were

also present at YXE Connects, an annual event that brings together community organizations from around Saskatoon to deliver free services and resources and build relationships with community members in inner-city Saskatoon.

SEIU-West proudly supported sports in our communities. We sponsored the Saskatoon World Jr. Lacrosse tournament and both the Swift Current 57's and the Moose Jaw Miller Express baseball teams!

Purple was present at the Swift Current Windscape Kite Festival, the Regina Folk Festival and the Filipino Pavilion at the Saskatoon FolkFest!

SEIU-West prides itself on its community involvement, and we are always looking to hear about ways to support not only our members, but their communities as well. If you have a suggestions for a volunteer/sponsorship opportunity, please email actions@seiuwest.ca!

Work in Progress... Member Portal

By Catherine Gendron, Project Coordinator

In the Summer 2018 issue of the Front Line, we shared our excitement about our new SEIU-West website!

We hope that, you've had a chance to-check out our new look.

Though it has only been live since July 1st, we've already seen a jump in online applications for events.

We hope this mobile-friendly site has made navigating the site easier for members.

If you are looking for something that used to be on the

website, please use the contact form as we are still in the process of moving content over – there was a lot of amazing content, so we appreciate your continued patience!

We also have some more exciting news!

We are working on the development of a members-only section! Our roll out process is still being worked out so stay tuned to our Facebook page and future newsletters to get the latest.

A Tale of Two Leaders: Climbing the Ladder of Engagement

Lori Johb has had many roles in the labour movement in Saskatchewan since the 1990s. In SEIU she has served as a shop steward, course facilitator, unit chair, and executive board member. She has served on the Executive Council of the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour (SFL), first as a Vice-President and since 2010 as Treasurer. This June, she put herself forward as a candidate for SFL President after Larry Hubich announced his retirement. The vote will be held at the SFL Convention in Regina October 24-27.



Lori Johb

Q: When did you first become a union member? What was your first introduction to a union role within SEIU?

A: I began working as a dietary aide at Lerose Lodge in LeRoy in 1988. At the time we were represented by SEIU Local 333. I was recruited almost immediately to become trained as a shop steward.

Q: What has motivated you most as you have climbed the steps of the engagement ladder?

A: Health care reform, which forced changes to union affiliation (more than once) has helped me grow as an activist. In 1996 our facility closed and we were merged with another long-term care facility. This experience showed me how working in solidarity with others can turn a devastating situation into something positive. These are just a couple of examples. Seeing the strength in others and in working together has motivated me to become a leader.

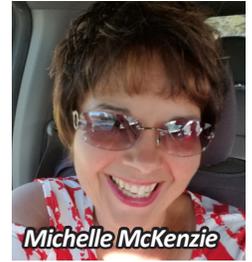
Q: Do you have a particular area of interest that led you to get involved with your union and the labour movement?

Ever since I first became involved in my union, one of my most important priorities has been worker safety. It started with workload issues and training around Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) which really convinced me that collectively we can make a difference. I encouraged our leadership at SEIU Local 333 to start a Worker Safety Committee. This committee continues to do great work. I believe ensuring workers are safe and healthy at work is one of the most important things we can do.

Q: If you could offer one piece of advice to those who are just becoming union members or just taking on their first leadership role — what would it be?

A: One of the best things about my role as a leader and as a facilitator is the chance to mentor young workers. The advice I like to give them is: be present. By this I mean, ask questions, show interest and don't get discouraged. If you find an issue that interests you, speak up and take on a role, even if it scares you a little. We can be most effective when we step outside our comfort zone. Young people need to realize that they have a great advantage because the labour movement needs them more than ever.

Michelle McKenzie has been a part of SEIU-West for ten years. In 2012 she ran for town council in Maple Creek, and won. When the town's mayor stepped down this spring, she stepped forward and filled in as interim mayor until elections were held on September 12th. She is now Mayor-elect of Maple Creek, and SEIU-West is delighted to share her story!



Michelle McKenzie

Q: When did you first become a union member? What was your first introduction to a union role within SEIU?

A: I work in health care as a Continuing Care Assistant and first became a union member in 1998. In 1999 I went to an SEIU Local 336 meeting (before we amalgamated as SEIU-West) and was elected a member-at-large on the local executive board. I took my training to become a Shop Steward and became someone who my coworkers could look to for guidance and rights at work. I shared my knowledge and union pride, and that helped people understand the value of being a SEIU-West member.

Q: What has motivated you most as you have climbed the steps of the engagement ladder?

A: The whole motivation for me is to provide the tools for people to have their questions or concerns answered. The diversity of people in Maple Creek makes our town great and it's important for those to have someone to answer their questions and ensure they have a voice.

Q: Do you have a particular area of interest that attracted you to local politics?

A: Yes, and that's definitely health care. We're an older community and when we changed from long term care to an integrated facility, I worked with the town to talk about the benefits of public health care. I advocated for home-like settings and worked to ensure the elderly community had a voice. People of all ages deserve safe, comforting places to live—that's an issue I'm really passionate about.

Q: If you could offer one piece of advice to those who are just becoming union members or just taking on their first leadership role — what would it be?

A: If you're a new union member, talk to your unit chair! They are going to provide you with the necessities to ensure you're involved, and there are so many opportunities to expand and grow as a leader.

If you're interested in politics, know that everyone has leadership qualities, and that you just need people to believe in you. It's okay if you don't know something, just ask!

It's the same in politics and the labour movement. As my union president told me, just be yourself! I'm where I'm at because of who I am, so I just need to be myself. My advice is to not be scared to ask questions – just keep going – one foot in front of the other.

Check out the full interviews on SEIUWEST.ca.

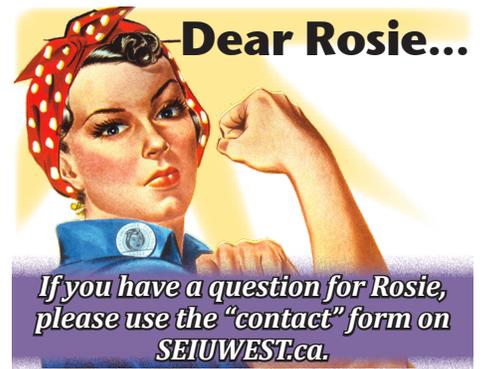
Community Worker Appreciation!

By Christine Miller, Communications Coordinator

We are excited to announce the Community-Based Organization (CBO) Committee is hosting a conference in SEIU-West's new training facility on November 6 & 7th in Saskatoon.

The inter-union CBO Committee (SEIU-West, SGEU, and CUPE) are working out the details and will have more information coming out soon regarding the agenda and registration process.

We continue to encourage our CBO members to share their stories on our SaskPeopleWhoCare.org site. You provide valuable community services that we rely on daily and your story needs to be shared.



Dear Rosie:

The hubby and I saw this politician on the news talking about the "middle class", and that led to us having a friendly argument about whether we are middle class. So what does it take to be middle class?

Ms. & Mr. in Moose Jaw

Dear Ms. MJ:

That's a really good question! There are different definitions of "middle class".

If you and the Mr. together make about \$75,000 a year, you're right in the middle: about half of Saskatchewan adults make more than you, and about half make less.

If you make \$95K, about 60% make less than you. Is that still "middle"?

Some definitions look at wealth instead of income. You're right in the middle if your net worth (what you own minus what you owe) is about \$300,000.

In a 2015 survey, 50% of Canadians said they were middle class. That sounds like a lot, but it's much lower than 15 years ago. It's a sign that Canadians are increasingly worried about inequality, retirement security, and their children's job prospects.

That makes Unions like SEIU-West more important than ever. We are the only organizations whose core mandate is to work toward a more just and humane society, which includes a secure job with the opportunity to advance.

Rosie

Education Sector: Attendance Management Pilot Program

By Kelly Harrington, Deputy Director of Political Action & Education

SEIU-West Members who work in Southeast Cornerstone Public School Division (SECPD) were advised this summer that their employer has contracted with Manulife to provide a pilot Attendance Management Program (AMP).

When these types of programs were introduced in the health care sector our members often found them intimidating and invasive. In fact, SEIU-West won a grievance ruling against the former Five Hills Regional Health Authority regarding how their AMP was being run. The arbitrator ruled that an AMP must meet the following conditions:

- It must treat all members fairly.
- It must take recognized medical and psychological disabilities into account.
- It must not create excessive barriers for employees who need to access WCB or negotiated benefits such as sick leave, disability insurance, or compassionate care or bereavement leave.

SEIU-West will be watching closely to make sure SECPD's AMP meets these conditions.

If you have any negative experiences with this new program, please contact your unit chairperson or call the MRC (1-888-999-7348 ext. 2298) so that we are aware and can take the necessary action.



MRC Quick Tip

When members are attending an SEIU-West event (such as a course), they are entitled to be granted paid Union Leave from their Employer if they are scheduled to work on the day(s) of the event.

The Employer's duty to grant Union Leave is generally subject to operational considerations: mainly, whether someone is available to backfill the member's shift(s).

To access Union Leave, make the request in writing to the Employer with as much advance notice as possible, to ensure that they have plenty of time to arrange backfill.

CBA Questions? Call the Member Resource Centre (MRC): 1- 888-999-7348 ext. 2298.