

THE | PROFESSIONAL

INCLUDES
2015
FINANCIAL REPORT

June 2016 Volume 42 Issue 2

BC's Union for Professionals

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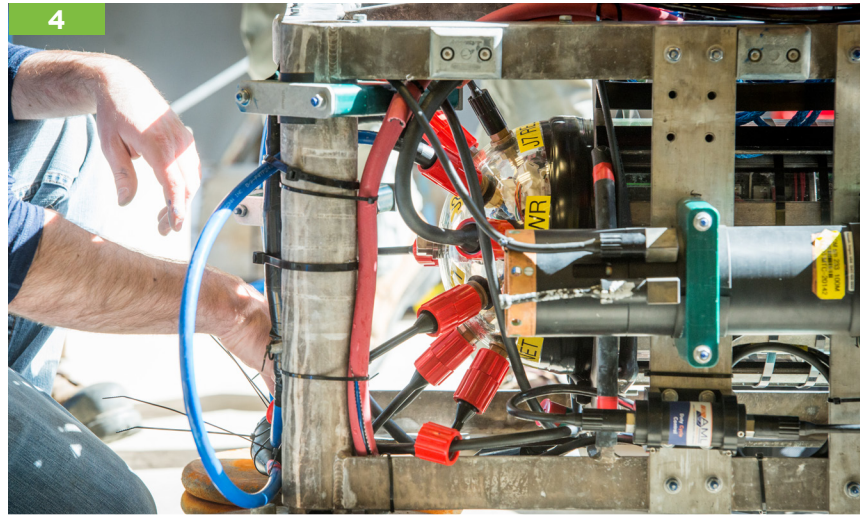
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Publications Mailing Agreement 40902044
Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to:
Professional Employees Association
505-1207 Douglas Street
Victoria, BC V8W 2E7



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Today, the PEA has a mandate to become an ongoing affiliate of the BC Federation of Labour (BCFED) and the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC). In May, 85 per cent of voting members voted yes to affiliation. The Association executive believes this is the right choice for the PEA. We believe that ongoing affiliation to the BCFED and CLC will provide us with a stronger voice in public sector bargaining; better access to high-quality, cost-effective, union-specific education and training; valuable networking opportunities for members and staff; and protection from raiding by other affiliated unions.

We spoke with a lot of members in the lead-up to the affiliation vote. In conversations with our local reps, chapter executives and members, we heard your concerns. We heard calls for even greater transparency and clarity on the impact of affiliation on our bottom line. We're taking action on these calls, and that starts with the financial report included in this issue of *The Professional*. PEA Secretary-Treasurer John Foxgord has prepared a detailed review of our 2015 financial statements. This includes our operating expenses, our strategic investments and the overall picture of our financial health.

The conversations we had with members leading up to the affiliation vote will continue. At our recent education conference, we focused on our member-to-member outreach initiative. Over the next six months, our local reps will endeavour to speak with as many members as possible. This is the first time in the PEA's 42-year history that we have undertaken a member-to-member campaign. It is an exciting initiative that will strengthen the PEA and give members a greater voice in their union.

Thank you,

Frank Kohlberger

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THE PROFESSIONAL

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A COMPUTER NETWORK ON THE OCEAN FLOOR

PEA MEMBERS AT OCEAN NETWORKS CANADA ARE CONTRIBUTING TO SCIENCE THROUGH CREATING AND MAINTAINING A NETWORK OF INSTRUMENTS HUNDREDS OF METRES BELOW THE OCEAN SURFACE

WORDS JESSICA WOOLLARD

PHOTOS AARON LUTSCH

Off the shore of Sable Island, about 175 kilometres from the coast of Nova Scotia, a large ship moved through the fog towing an array of hydrophone streamers eight kilometres long. The array contained thousands of underwater microphones used for receiving reflected sound from the layers of rock beneath the seabed. Information amassed from the microphones would be used to determine the gas reserves encapsulated in the rock.

Paul Macoun, a mechanical engineer, was watching the activity from a small skiff floating nearby; he was part of the team that set up and operated this technology for an oil exploration company.

Since his teenage years in Victoria, Macoun had felt an affinity with the coast and dreamed of a career that would see him

on the water. But on that day, as he watched the impressive display of engineering and technology, something shifted.

"I remember thinking that I love the environment I'm in, but this isn't what I had in mind," he says. "I enjoyed the adventure, but I didn't enjoy that I was doing somewhat exploitative things."

Soon after that trip in 1999, Macoun left his position and began a master's degree in physical oceanography at the University of Victoria. His graduate research led to an opportunity to work on VENUS, a proposed underwater observatory planned for Saanich Inlet, the Strait of Georgia and the Strait of Juan de Fuca. Now fully operational, VENUS—the Victoria Experimental Network Under the Sea—is a network of underwater instruments supported by approximately 50 kilometers of cables installed hundreds of metres beneath



the waves. Hundreds of sensors measure physical, chemical and biological properties of the environment—water temperature, pressure, ocean currents, chemical properties, and whale sounds to name a few. Cameras are often sent down, too, to collect photos and videos that are shared on a website and social media pages. The information collected—hundreds of gigabytes of data each day—is made available online free of charge to researchers, scientists and anyone else interested (the Canadian and US navies are often keen to have a look).

Macoun, 45 and a father of three, claims that the VENUS technology is not “rocket science—it’s like your office network, but in an unfriendly place—the ocean.”

In 2010, VENUS and its sister project, NEPTUNE (North-East Pacific Time-series Undersea Networked Experiments), were brought together by UVic under the non-profit Ocean Networks Canada. ONC’s mandate is not to conduct research, but, in consultation with the science community, to build technology and systems, under water and on shore, to monitor the environment and produce data to be used for research. “We take lofty science goals and try to meet them as best we can in a practical way,” Macoun explains.

In February 2016, the BC government announced a \$5 million dollar investment in ONC to develop technology for an early earthquake warning system for the province. The funding will allow ONC to add more offshore systems and develop land-based ones to collect and analyze seismic activity. Once in place, the systems will give advance notice of an earthquake, allowing more time for people to get to safety.

Macoun is the field services manager at ONC. He helps build new installations like the early earthquake warning system at the facility in North Saanich, and maintains existing ones like VENUS and NEPTUNE. He also organizes offshore expeditions around BC and up to the Arctic. True to the goal of his youth to work on the ocean, his role sees him out on the water around six weeks per year. One of his and his



ONC's mandate is not to conduct research, but, in consultation with the science community, to build technology and systems, under water and on shore, to monitor the environment and produce data to be used for research. "We take lofty science goals and try to meet them as best we can in a practical way," Macoun explains.

colleagues' most fascinating tasks is to use a robot roughly the size of a small Volkswagen car to build and maintain undersea infrastructures and help conduct science on the seafloor.

Macoun considers himself lucky to be doing this work among such talented colleagues. "The people who work in

the organization are highly skilled, very creative people ... It takes a lot of talent and ingenuity to do this kind of work," he says.

And he is rightfully among them. "I took a roundabout route, but I eventually found where I was meant to be." •

IF WE'RE NOT MACHINES, WHY ARE WE EXPECTED TO WORK LIKE THEM?

Why the labour
movement is doing
more on mental
health in the
workplace

WORDS JACKIE WONG

Whether it's the loss of a loved one, a sudden illness or a relationship breakdown, the strife that comes with being human takes a toll on our professional lives. We all know what it's like to come to work in the midst of personal struggle: it can feel like a near-impossible task, and workday challenges can feel magnified, unbearable. Our ability to concentrate, to sleep through the night, to feel steady and capable, suffers.

The experience can be isolating. But we're not alone: one in five Canadians experiences a mental health problem or illness every year, according to the Mental Health Commission of Canada. And cumulative mental health experiences among workers cost the national economy in excess of \$50 billion a year.

Al Gallupe, a labour relations officer with the Professional Employees Association, knows the situation well. His job involves acting as a liaison between PEA members and their employers during times of struggle. On the subject of how employers can support workers dealing with mental health challenges, Gallupe says, "it's a subject area a lot of people are lacking in knowledge about."

Despite some recent gains in bringing mental health into the public conversation, strong workplace cultures of overwork and "bucking up" when the going gets tough underscore the daily work lives of many professionals, including PEA members.

This culture of overwork goes against knowledge we all have but often fail to set in motion: that our mental wellness is strongly linked with our performance at work.

Gallupe would like to turn that around. "We're not machines," he says. "When something [mental health-related] happens, it affects everything."

Situational depression can result from traumatic or destabilizing life events like loss, illness or relationship breakdown. Long-term mental conditions can flare up or decrease in prominence throughout a person's life. The stresses of work can play a role in how people experience

anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia or other mental health conditions.

But regardless of what a person experiences, “it doesn’t mean their career has to suffer,” Gallupe says.

Given the labour movement’s long history of advocating for the rights of people with disabilities to be accommodated in the workplace, Gallupe says, we ought, in 2016, to be at a place where an open discussion about workplace mental health—and what unions can do to support it—feels normal and normalized. Of course, this isn’t always the case. Many workers remain unaware of the supports available to them, and employers can be reluctant to enact them.

Gallupe says if he had one message to share with someone suffering from mental distress, it would be that there is help and support through their union. “We don’t have just blunt instruments. We do have more subtle approaches that can help them in their workplace. There are tools and methods ... the union can draw the various actors together to be able to affect a good outcome for them, no matter what.”

A GROWING NEED FOR SUPPORT

There are many ways the PEA works to support the mental health of its members. It begins in conversation with labour relations officers, who can connect employees and employers to resources and support services. Labour relations officers tailor their

approach to specific cases, and it’s never “one size fits all.”

Melissa Moroz, a labour relations officer for the University of Victoria chapter, notes a rise in the number of PEA members requiring accommodation for mental health reasons. “We’ve seen more grievances, more cases,” she says. Reports from the university’s benefits carrier also show an increase in the use of prescription drugs associated with treating people with mental illness,” she adds.

While it is true that increasing numbers of PEA members are coming forward with requests for accommodation related to mental health concerns, it’s not clear whether their needs are being met productively.

Part of that is rooted in a longstanding reluctance by many people to share information about their illness. “Opening up your personal medical file and having other people know that you have these illnesses or illness—that still carries a lot of stigma,” Moroz notes.

Labour law has established “duty to accommodate” provisions based on Supreme Court decisions going back 20 years. The duty to accommodate requires employers to make alternative arrangements for people with disabilities—including mental health conditions—so long as doing so does not create undue hardship.

“We’re nowhere in approaching that test in terms of mental health accommodation,” says Lynn Carlile,



THE COSTS OF MENTAL HEALTH



the national education representative for the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC). “Because of that stigma and discrimination—and ultimately what’s at the bottom of it is fear—people don’t want to know how to accommodate somebody.”

Workplace accommodation for a person with mental health concerns can be simple, Carlile says. It can involve moving someone from an open-cubicle environment to a private setting where they can work without distractions, or a graduated return-to-work program in which a person works half days instead of full days. And modified deadlines or more flexible scheduling can go a long way toward helping a person move through hardship.

THE PROFESSIONAL PERILS OF OVERWORK

The fact that supports and accommodation are available within the union doesn’t mean that they’re always used fully. It’s not easy to ask for help at even the best of times. And workers—including professional members of the PEA—are entrenched in workplace cultures that reward and expect overwork to the point of mental health crisis, burnout, and worse.

“It is very complex,” says Melissa Moroz. “I deal with cases all the time where the employer, from my perspective, has failed to accommodate to the point of undue hardship ... but will the employee grieve that? No, probably not. Because once it gets to that stage, they’re not up for that kind of a fight.”

Activating the accommodations that people are entitled to can be complicated in professional contexts, Moroz says. Scaling

back work hours for those who work at specialized jobs is difficult because it can be hard to find replacements. “Often employers don’t want to accommodate,” Moroz says. “Job-shares aren’t as easy as they might be when you’re dealing with more interchangeable jobs. So accommodations for professionals can be more complex.”

Still, alternative possibilities exist. “I think that we can be creative if employers are willing to engage the union and their own workforce more in trying to find those solutions,” Moroz says.

Moroz notes that the labour movement pushed for the 40-hour and 35-hour workweek. “Those are there for a reason—so that people don’t kill themselves at work,” she says. It’s possible, then, for unions to build the same momentum for stronger mental health supports.

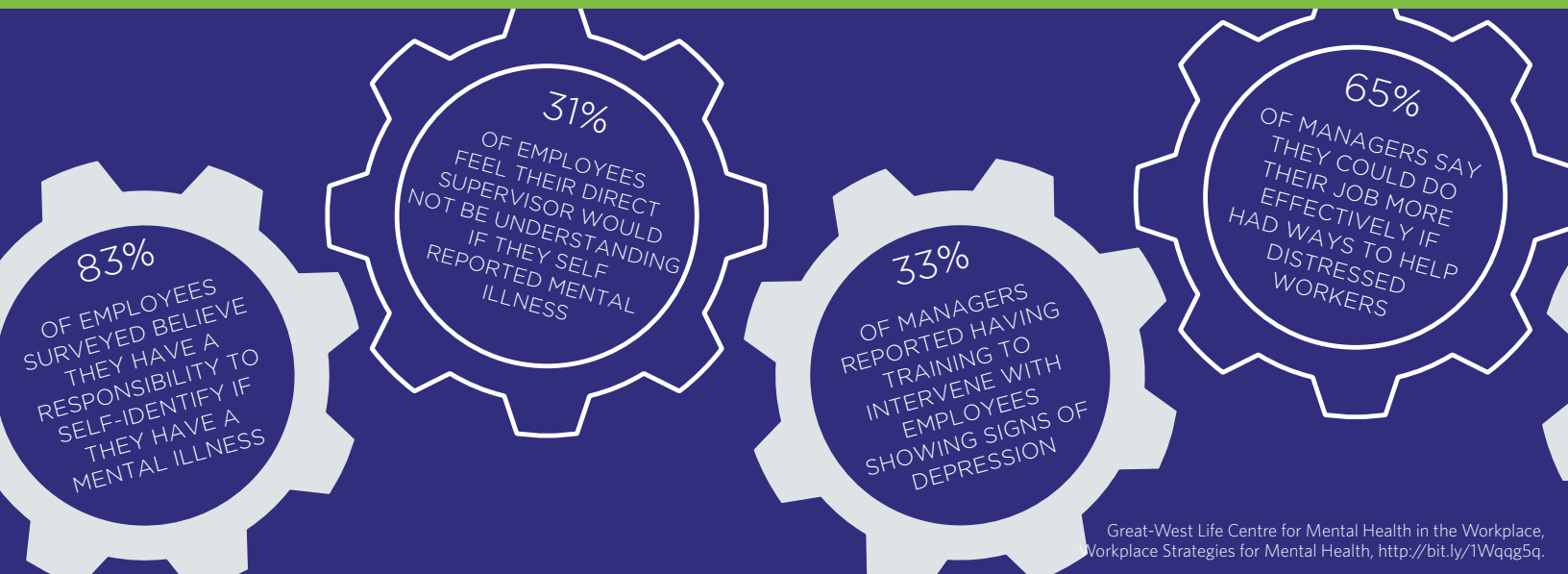
Self-care, taking time to rest, and knowing that the workplace won’t implode without you can be as important as advocating for systemic changes in the workplace, Moroz adds.

“We have really good sick leave for PEA members,” she says, “and they should use it; it’s there for a reason. I can’t tell you how many times [UVic] would acknowledge people don’t use their sick leave when they should. Everybody pays for that in the long run.”

CHANGING THE CULTURE, CHANGING THE WORKPLACE

There is widespread interest among both workers and labour activists to change the workplace so it’s a healthier space for everybody.

“Unless members come forward, we’re not going to be able to change that workplace. We’re not going to be able to change attitudes. Solutions are possible for those who feel like they’re in untenable situations, but often the hardest step is reaching out to start addressing it.”



“The current culture has not worked for us,” notes the CLC’s Lynn Carlile. “I encourage younger folks all the time to challenge what’s going to be the norm.”

Carlile is currently writing the curriculum for the CLC’s first summer school workshop on mental health in the workplace, which will pilot this summer in Ontario, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island.

The weeklong course is open to anybody affiliated with the CLC, from regular members to stewards, local officers and staff reps. “This is an area that lots of workplaces and lots of locals have issues with and just haven’t gotten the skillset and support yet to deal with it as they’d like to,” she says.

Meanwhile, Amy Huziak, the CLC’s national representative for young workers, is building momentum among younger members of the labour movement. This fall 2016, at

the inaugural CLC Young Workers Summit, mental health will be strongly featured in the conference program. This is based on a suggestion from the summit’s organizing committee.

Other young labour activists have been working to build similar momentum around creating a healthier workplace. The Teamsters’ Youth Committee, for example, launched a 2015 campaign called “Make it Mandatory,” which advocates for mandatory workplace mental health supports.

“I think that Millennials really want to have better supports when it comes to mental health,” Huziak says. She suggests that part of that interest comes from Millennials having grown up among older family members who went through the stigma and silencing surrounding mental illness.


To Huziak, part of her work is about ensuring that younger voices are heard in and about the labour movement. This means making sure that “more

young people are covered by collective agreements and have better job security so that when [mental health] issues come up they have that ability to deal with them without ever feeling like they’re being exploited by their employer, or their employer won’t understand.”

THE POWER OF COMING FORWARD

Back in BC, the PEA’s labour relations officers continue to work at building a more equitable workplace by challenging systemic injustices. For Al Gallepe, change starts on the ground.

“Unless [members] come forward, we’re not going to be able to change that workplace. We’re not going to be able to change attitudes,” he says. Solutions are possible for those who feel like they’re in untenable situations, but often the hardest step is reaching out to start addressing it. •



EDUCATION CONFERENCE WE'RE STRONGER WHEN EVERYONE IS INVOLVED

WORDS BRETT HARPER

PHOTOS AARON LUTSCH

“Change happens gradually and then suddenly, one conversation at a time,” said GLP member Beth Eagles. She had just finished working through an exercise on the story of self and volunteered her story of how she got involved with the PEA. This year’s conference focused on increasing communication skills in order to make connections easier.

The theme “We are stronger when everyone is involved” highlighted the need to bring all members of our union together through individual conversations and connections. Sixty-eight delegates attended this year’s conference. This year marked a shift: following from its commitment in the 2016 strategic plan to prioritize training and education, the Association put an additional \$30,000 toward extending the education conference by half a day.



OPPOSITE Oil and Gas Commission member Thom Sedun in a small group workshop. **ABOVE** Heidi Reinikka, Government Licensed Professionals and Peter Critchley, Okanagan Regional Library chapter

Members left the conference with practical skills they can use in the workplace to connect with members and colleagues. These skills also will also assist attendees with speaking about the value of public services to their friends, family and colleagues.

BUILDING INDIVIDUAL SKILLS

Different from years past, participants had the opportunity to choose a stream that addressed their specific areas of interest for growing skills for the workplace. The different streams included social media, labour history, how to run effective meetings, how to prepare for investigation meetings, and issues involved in being a supervisor of other union members.

The planning for these sessions was built on feedback received from our local reps. We engaged our local leaders to share their observations of what kinds of education and training would be of most value for the membership. The PEA plans to provide some of these sessions again in other venues for members.

MOBILIZING, FRAMING AND STORYTELLING

The group skill-building sessions focused on mobilizing, framing and storytelling. Together, these skills can be effective for helping to open up conversation on issues important to PEA members. Janet Routledge, a former BC regional coordinator for the Public Service Alliance of

Canada and former director of political action at the BCFED, used an analogy to highlight the importance of an engaged membership. “Democracy is not a spectator sport,” she said. “Too often the members are in the bleachers, watching the union and employer doing all the playing on the field. We need to invite them down to the playing field.” The conversation skills learned at the conference and the forthcoming member-to-member campaign are designed to connect and invite members “down to the field.”

Rob Cottingham, director of integrated communications at the Now Group, shifted the conference from the theoretical to the practical. He spoke about the concept of message framing. He described frames as the mindset we use to approach an issue. Within frames, he explored the use of rhetoric and language and how these impact our perception of issues of concern to the labour movement. Members practised talking about the value of public services and unions in exercises designed to build skills for engaging in difficult conversations.

“Never a story without a statistic, never a statistic without a story,” said Jennifer Hollett. She was explaining our reliance on facts and data to persuade the public to our side. “If we start telling stories that connect with people in their daily lives, it will help people see how to tune into this issue,” said Hollett. Using story to explain the need for increased post-secondary education funding or an adequately staffed professional public service can be more effective than relying only on data and facts to explain the need for investments. Hollett, a former reporter and instructor at Harvard University, provided an informative session on the story of self. This concept, developed by Marshall Ganz, emphasizes connecting with others by identifying who you are and why you are who you are. The exercise allowed members to connect with each other through personal stories of choice, challenge and outcome. Several PEA members shared their personal journey of how they became involved with the PEA. •



1. SMS Chapter Chair Natasha Carville 2. GLP member Xin Yuan 3. Presenter Janet Routledge 4. BCFED Secretary-Treasurer Aaron Ekman 5. UVic Chapter Chair Sheryl Karras 6. GLP member Charles Klassen 7. HSP chapter Vice-Chairperson Sean Lisik 8. Presenter Rob Cottingham 9. GLP member Bradley White 10. UVic member Kristen Ficke 11. GLP member Beth Eagles 12. HSP member Edyta Nosiadek 13. GLP member Nichole Prichard



RAISING THE FLOOR THE MINIMUM WAGE AND WHAT IT MEANS TO YOU

WORDS BEN ISITT

“Responding to this political pressure, major cities including Seattle and Los Angeles have embraced the transition to a \$15 minimum wage. The State of California recently announced that it too would legislate a \$15 per hour minimum wage – a policy that is expected to increase the income of 43 per cent of workers in the state.”

In April 2016, British Columbia achieved the dubious distinction of having the lowest minimum wage in the country. This occurred after New Brunswick, a perennially under-performing jurisdiction where housing and other necessities of life are more affordable than BC, raised its minimum wage to \$10.65 per hour.

The wage floor in British Columbia had crept up a few months earlier — from \$10.25 to \$10.45 in September 2015 — at the same time that Premier Christy Clark announced that, henceforth, increases in the minimum wage would be tied to the consumer price index (CPI). This announcement, which had a veneer of fairness and common sense, ignored the intensive advocacy taking place in BC for an increase in the minimum wage to the emerging North American standard of \$15 per hour.

While the provincial government relented a few months later, and announced a staged increase to \$10.85 in September 2016 and \$11.25 in September 2017, minimum wage workers in BC will continue to live in poverty until they receive a substantial raise.

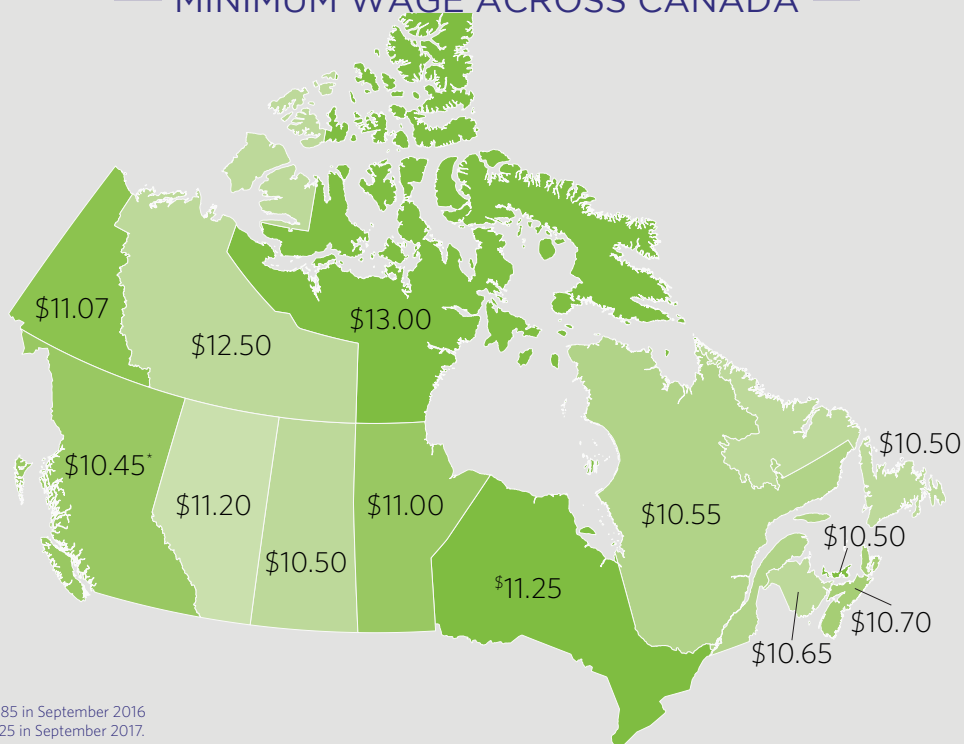
British Columbia hasn't always been the national laggard in minimum wage policy. In 2001, the province led the country with a minimum wage of \$8 per hour. However, this rate was slashed by a third for young workers when Gordon Campbell introduced a “training wage” of \$6 per hour applied to the first 500 hours of employment. The \$8 wage for other workers remained frozen for the next decade, at the same time that the cost of living increased by about 15 per cent.

Today, more than 100,000 British Columbia workers earn the minimum wage. About two-thirds of these workers are women. Contrary to assertions by business lobby groups, these workers are not primarily teenagers starting out in the labour market; nearly half of all BC workers earning the minimum wage are 25 or older.

ORIGINS OF THE MINIMUM WAGE

Minimum wage legislation was first introduced in the late 1800s in response to working-class campaigns against

— MINIMUM WAGE ACROSS CANADA —



sweatshops and the harsh working and living conditions that accompanied the Industrial Revolution. New Zealand became the first country to adopt a national minimum wage law in 1894, followed by the Australian state of Victoria in 1896. Great Britain adopted minimum wage legislation in 1909 and other European countries followed.

Early minimum wage legislation was often based on government-appointed boards that set wage rates in specific industries. Because women and children were disproportionately employed in low-wage occupations, many of the first minimum wage decisions applied to these workers.

In Canada, minimum wage legislation was slower to emerge, with the first steps involving “fair wage policies” to improve conditions for workers on government-funded public-works contracts.

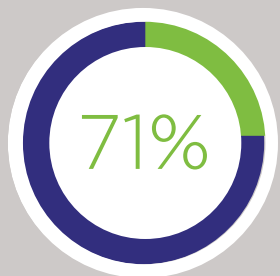
In North America, Massachusetts became the first jurisdiction to adopt a minimum wage law. The 1912 law introduced pay

standards for women and children but was criticized for lacking enforcement, with companies that refused to pay the mandated wage incurring no penalty beyond having their name published in the newspaper. At the time, there was concern that minimum wage laws infringed on freedom of contract, a right entrenched in the 13th amendment to the US Constitution. In 1923, the US Supreme Court struck down the minimum wage law in the District of Columbia on this basis.

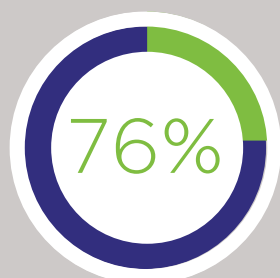
In Canada, there was no constitutional barrier to minimum wage legislation. In 1918, the Women’s Minimum Wage Act was introduced in the British Columbia legislature, reflecting pressure from labour organizations and the Minimum Wage League, as well as the newly elected MLA Mary Ellen Smith (the first woman elected to the BC legislature and the first woman in the British Empire to serve as a cabinet minister and Speaker of the House). Smith won a January 1918 Vancouver by-election on a platform that included a “minimum living wage for women workers” and “equal pay for women with men for equal work.” As a delegate from the Minimum Wage League

FIGHT FOR 15

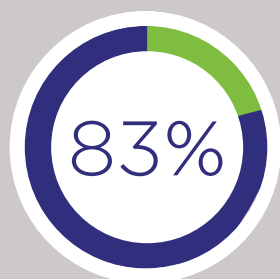
WHAT BC THINKS



Percentage of British Columbians who think that increasing the minimum wage to \$15 an hour would help boost the local economy



Percentage of British Columbians who support raising the minimum wage to \$15 an hour



Percentage of British Columbians who think it is necessary to ensure a person earning the minimum wage can live above the poverty line

Source: BC Federation of Labour, <http://bit.ly/1Thsm7p>

WHO EARNS MINIMUM WAGE?

60%

of people making minimum wage are **women**

82%

of people making minimum wage are **older than 20**

13%

of people making minimum wage are **seniors**

68%

of people making minimum wage **do not live with their parents**

Source: BC Federation of Labour, <http://bit.ly/1Thsm7p>

declared following a lukewarm response to the statement from the premier, "We will sit on the steps of the parliament buildings until we are heard."

The BC legislation, introduced by the Minister of Labour in March 1918, established a minimum wage board to regulate wages for women in specific industries at a level "adequate to furnish the necessary cost of living." However, the board calculated wage rates at the level of subsistence of a single woman, ignoring the fact that many women had dependents and needed to save for sickness and old age. BC was the second province to adopt minimum wage standards, after Alberta amended its Factories Act in 1917 to mandate a minimum wage of \$1.50 per shift for all workers covered by the legislation (irrespective of gender) and \$1 per shift for apprentices. By 1920, all Canadian provinces with the exception of New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island had adopted minimum wage legislation for women workers

In 1925, British Columbia went a step further, introducing the Men's Minimum Wage Act, which attracted considerable interest from across North America because of its application to male workers. Like the earlier legislation, a three-member board was appointed to set the wage rate in specific industries, chaired by the deputy minister of labour with a representative of labour and employers. The first two rulings of the board established a minimum wage of 40 cents per hour for men employed in the lumber industry and restaurants and catering. This contrasted with wage rates of between 28 cents and 33 cents per hour for women in a dozen industries — a wage gap that saw men earn roughly a third more per hour than women for comparable work.

While the legislation and regulations governing the minimum wage in BC were amended from time to time, legislated wage parity between men and women workers would not be achieved until 1972, when the Dave Barrett NDP government eliminated the gendered distinction of wage rates by introducing a uniform (and strengthened) minimum wage of \$2 per hour. The United States had moved toward uniform standards a generation earlier with the Fair Labor Standards Act (1938), establishing a national minimum wage for male and female workers.

ORGANIZED LABOUR AND THE STRUGGLE FOR MINIMUM EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

Workers who enjoy the benefits of union protection and a collective bargaining relationship with their employer are often insulated from the desperate economic conditions faced by low-wage workers. However, even within the PEA, there is wide variation in hourly wage rates and income among workers in different sectors and occupational groups. These variations reflect the pattern of collective bargaining in the province, economic conditions in each sector, and the bargaining strength of PEA members in relation to employers.

In British Columbia today, a full-time worker earning the minimum wage of \$10.45 per hour receives a total income of less than \$1,900 per month, while the average cost of a one-bedroom rental apartment is approximately \$900 per month (with rents exceeding \$1,000 in Metro Vancouver). The cost of rent under this scenario approaches or exceeds 50 per cent of the worker's gross earnings, while the Government of Canada, through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, identifies 30 per cent as the desirable maximum housing cost as a proportion of total earnings, to leave workers with sufficient income to cover other necessities of life.

The gap between the total income earned by a full-time minimum wage worker and the actual cost of living has given rise to the concept of the "living wage" — the amount of income a worker requires to cover the basic cost of living (housing, food, clothing and transportation) and live with dignity rather than in poverty.

The labour movement in British Columbia, recognizing the threat to the well being of workers and the health of society generally from a persistent pool of low-wage workers trapped in poverty, has advocated for policies to support a living wage. In Metro Vancouver, the living wage (calculated annually based on actual costs of goods and services) currently exceeds \$20 per hour – nearly double the current legislated minimum wage rate.

THE FIGHT FOR FIFTEEN

Minimum wage is a hot topic across North America today. This reflects the growing frustration among minimum wage workers, including the disproportionate number of women workers, workers of colour and immigrant workers employed at "McJobs" in the tertiary services sector.

Responding to this political pressure, major cities including Seattle and Los Angeles have embraced the transition to a \$15 minimum wage. The State of California recently announced that it too would legislate a \$15 per hour minimum wage – a policy that is expected to increase the income of 43 per cent of workers in the state.

RAISING THE FLOOR IN BC

As the cost of living for housing and other social goods continues to rise in British Columbia, and the lowest paid workers fall further behind other workers, pressure will intensify on the BC government to raise the minimum wage.

Increases to the minimum wage provide a more cost-effective mechanism for improving workers' incomes than the provision of direct support payments from the state. Higher wages also help to improve standards for labour generally by strengthening the bargaining position of the provincial workforce as well as workers in specific sectors. Health outcomes are also improved as workers have more disposable income.

Professionals in the PEA, who are insulated from the worst economic pressures faced by minimum wage workers, would be wise to lend their voice and organizational muscle to the movement for a substantial increase in the minimum wage in British Columbia. A meaningful raise for the lowest paid workers is long overdue. •

Ben Isitt is a historian and legal scholar specializing in labour relations and social movements in British Columbia. Ben also serves the public as a city councillor and regional director in Victoria.

2015 FINANCIAL REPORT

MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY-TREASURER



PEA Secretary-Treasurer John Foxgord (right) and PEA Financial Officer Teresa Husband (left) at the 2016 Education Conference.

Transparency is a value that is important to the PEA. Living this value includes ensuring our financial statements are easily accessible to members. That's why, beginning this year, we are introducing a detailed summary of the PEA's financial position as a regular feature in *The Professional*. From now on we will report to members annually on the state of our finances, as opposed to biennially at our convention. In addition, we have posted the 2015 draft audited financial statements online at pea.org/financials. The statements are not final until approved by delegates at our convention in 2017.

The PEA operates through the collection of dues revenue from its members. Our membership dues are some of the lowest in the province, at 1 per cent of salary. In

addition to the money we collect in membership dues, the PEA has access to investment funds. This money has been invested strategically over time and has grown to a sizeable amount that is used in particular circumstances.

Over the years, we have used money from our investments to fund a variety of special projects and campaigns related to the defence of our union and strategic initiatives. These are important initiatives that we would be otherwise unable to fund through our existing operating budget. The PEA executive takes serious care and consideration when using PEA investment funds for any expenditure. We review our budgets (including spending from investment funds) on a monthly basis and receive detailed investment-earnings reports, with performance metrics and benchmarks, on a quarterly basis.

We believe members have a right to know how their dues are being spent. Our efforts at transparency continue to evolve, and I hope this report demonstrates that our union's finances are sound and well managed.

I would like to thank our financial officer, Teresa Husband, for the excellent job she does of managing the PEA's finances throughout the year. I would also like to thank Jennifer Bond, who was a temporary financial officer for the PEA. Finally, thanks are due to our auditors for their ongoing assistance in ensuring our financials are transparent to our members.

John Foxgord
Secretary-Treasurer

BALANCE SHEET | 2015 FINANCIALS

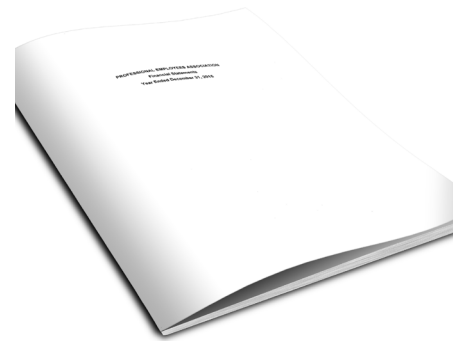
ASSETS	2015	2014
CURRENT		
Cash	\$ 127,949	\$ 73,151
Accounts receivable	133,699	136,691
Prepaid expenses and supplies	32,066	26,661
	293,714	236,503
Capital Assets	31,140	39,528
Investments	9,992,939	9,460,599
	\$ 10,317,793	\$ 9,736,630

The balance sheet is a snapshot of the financial position of the PEA. It incorporates all of the financial assets (what is owned) and liabilities (what is owed), for an overall picture of our financial health.

In 2015, the PEA's net assets increased by \$562,984. This increase resulted from a surplus of revenues (membership dues and investment income) minus all expenses for the calendar year.

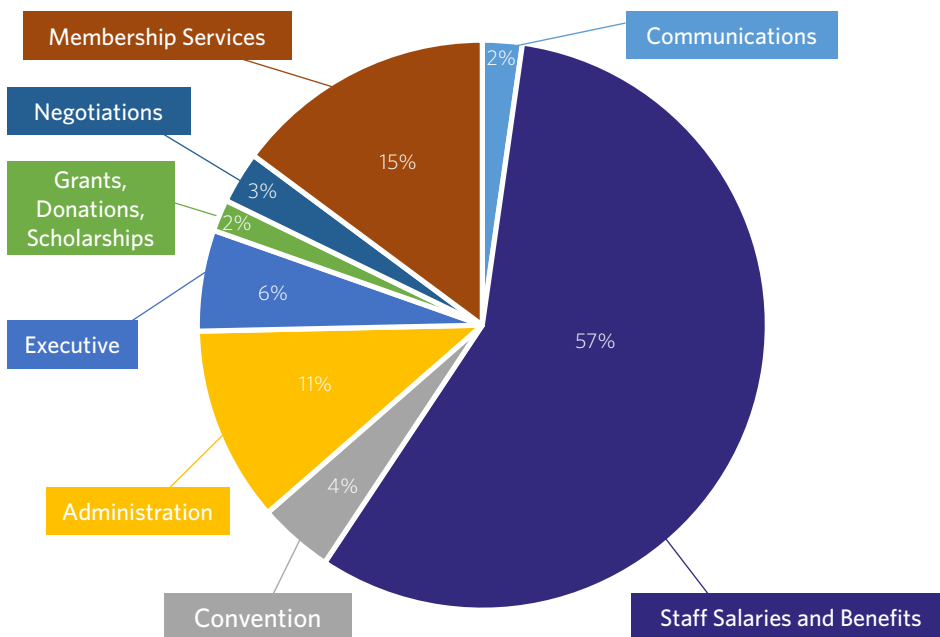
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

CURRENT		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 296,764	\$ 278,829
Employee benefits payable	15,018	14,772
	311,782	293,601
NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted fund	9,896,130	9,351,117
Invested in capital assets	31,140	39,528
Internally restricted funds	78,741	52,384
	10,006,011	9,443,029
	\$ 10,317,793	\$ 9,736,630



Read the full audited financial statements on our website in the members-only section at pea.org/financials.

OPERATING EXPENSES | 2015 FINANCIALS



ADMINISTRATION

This includes costs to run the day-to-day operations of the organization, including rent, equipment and more.

COMMUNICATIONS

Expenses in communications include the publication of *The Professional*, social media, graphic design, photography, media relations and the website.

CONVENTION

The PEA's biennial convention is a key component of our democratic structure.

EXECUTIVE

This area covers the costs for meetings of the PEA executive and executive committees, which include travel, accommodation and paid union leave.

GRANTS, DONATIONS, SCHOLARSHIPS

This category provides funds to the Giving Back program and our scholarship and bursary program for PEA members and their families.

MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

Expenses in this area include new-member materials, local rep training, legal fees, chapter grants and servicing-related expenses.

NEGOTIATIONS

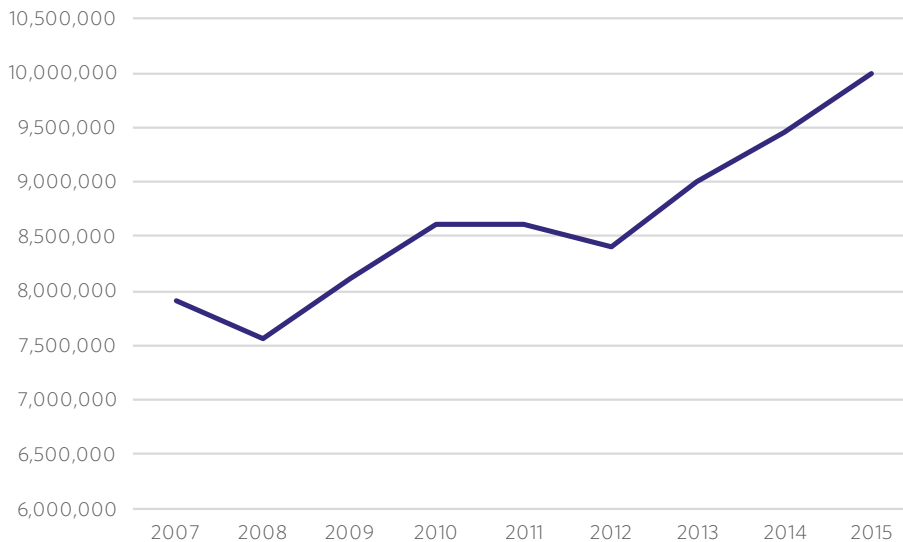
This includes paid union leave for bargaining committee members as well as meeting costs, travel costs, and legal fees.

STAFF SALARIES AND BENEFITS

This includes costs for staff salaries, training and benefits.

ADMINISTRATION	\$175,744
Bank charges and interest	2,004
Equipment repairs and lease costs	19,877
Occupancy costs – rent and utilities	115,778
Postage, stationary and publications	13,712
Professional fees	11,550
Telephone and internet	12,823
COMMUNICATIONS	\$35,775
CONVENTION	\$67,304
EXECUTIVE	\$90,870
GRANTS, DONATIONS, SCHOLARSHIPS	\$28,600
Grants and donations	18,100
Scholarships & Bursaries	10,500
MEMBERSHIP SERVICES	\$235,150
NEGOTIATIONS	\$46,793
STAFF SALARIES AND BENEFITS	\$904,100
	\$1,584,336

INVESTMENTS | 2015 FINANCIALS



The graph above demonstrates the ongoing growth of PEA investments to support members. This money is used in the event of a strike, in case we need to take an arbitration to the Supreme Court of Canada or to fund initiatives that defend our union or are strategic initiatives.

Through long-term diligence, the PEA has been able to continuously grow its investment fund. This money is held in reserve to be used in special situations such as a strike, legal action to pursue an arbitration through the courts, or other initiatives to defend our union. To the best of our knowledge, this is the largest per capita defence fund of any BC union.

Defence-of-the-union expenditures are critical investments the PEA must make to support our membership. Every expenditure in this category is approved by the Association executive. In 2013, delegates at the PEA convention approved the use of investment income to fund our trial BCFED affiliation. In years past we have used the funds to support bargaining, provide strike and picket pay, and produce advertising campaigns that raise public awareness of the PEA. We have also used this source of revenue to fund strategic planning initiatives that are critical to our renewal efforts.

The PEA's strategic plan is developed in lockstep with the budget. Where possible, defence-of-the-union expenditures are identified and costed during strategic planning.

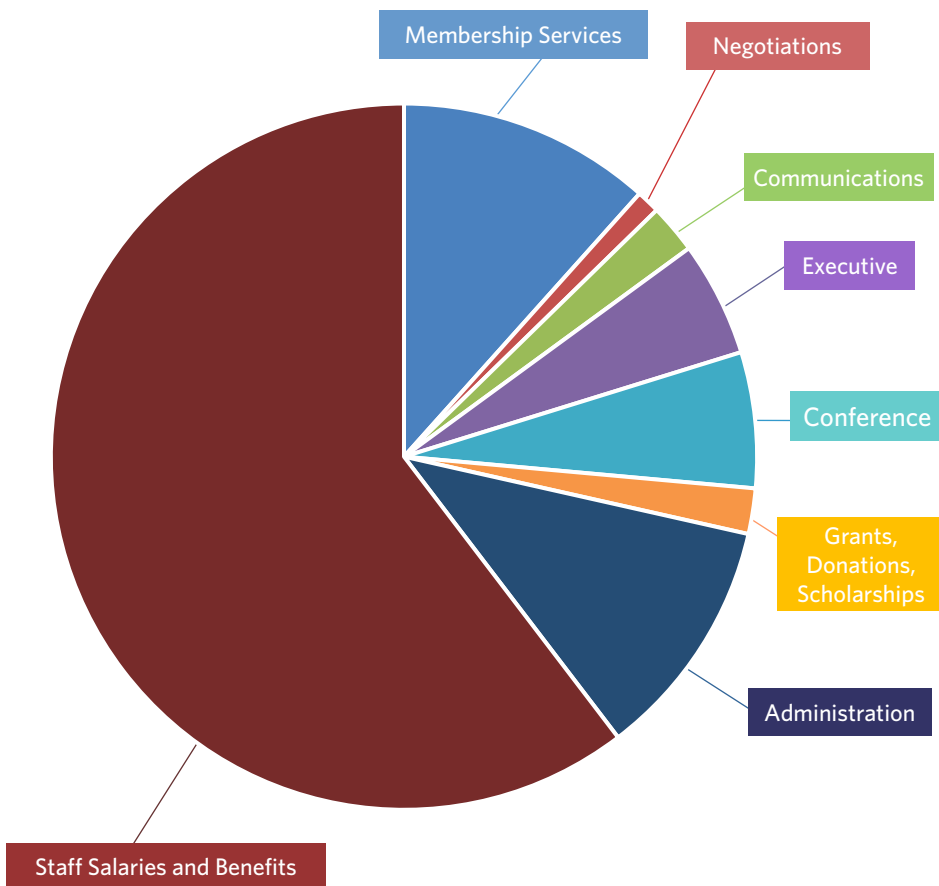
2015 DEFENCE OF THE UNION EXPENSES

BCFED AFFILIATION DUES*	\$23,919.00
BCFED EXPENSES*	\$8,022.00
STRIKE EXPENSES**	\$2,079.00
STRATEGIC PLANNING INITIATIVES	\$36,902.00
PEA 2015 MEMBERSHIP SURVEY	\$15,855.00
CLC WINTER SCHOOL	\$8,329.00
STRATEGIC PLANNING COSTS	\$9,821.00
UVIC ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN BC PRIORITIES	\$2,982.00
	\$70,922

*At the PEA Convention in 2013, delegates approved using investment income to fund BCFED trial affiliation and expenses.

**These expenses include strike readiness materials (placards).

BUDGET 2016



	2016 Budget	2015 Actual	Percentage Change
OPERATING EXPENDITURES			
Administration	186,671	175,744	6.2%
Communications	37,874	35,775	5.9%
Convention/Education Conference	104,500	67,304	55.3%
Executive	88,500	90,870	-2.6%
Grants, Donations and Scholarships	35,000	28,600	22.38%
Membership Services	195,298	235,150	-17.0%
Negotiations	18,000	46,793	-61.5%
Staff Salaries and Benefits	1,014,289	904,100	12.2%
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	1,680,132	1,584,336	6.05%
DEFENCE OF UNION EXPENDITURES			
TOTAL DEFENCE OF UNION EXPENSES	183,229	70,922	158.4%
CAPITAL EXPENDITURES			
TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENSES	16,222	13,883	16.9%

Budget 2016 is a predictive tool to help guide the effective use of the PEA's assets. Based on historical rates of return, we anticipate being able to draw on our investments to cover specific costs in excess of operating revenue while still achieving growth in the fund. Potential investment earnings in 2016 are not included as part of the budget.

The anticipated defence-of-the-union initiatives are the result of the strategic planning process undertaken each year by the PEA executive. Planned projects and initiatives for 2016 include BCFED and CLC membership dues and expenses, the BCFED affiliation vote, PEA executive strategic planning, a "culture of recognition" initiative, social issue organizing, and communication resources. Also included are CLC winter school training for six PEA members, an additional half day of training at the 2016 education conference, executive leadership development, a member-to-member outreach campaign and costs relating to a raid of PEA health science professionals members by the BC Nurses' Union.

Using investment income to fund strategic initiatives and operating shortfalls allows us to keep our dues rates at one per cent. ▪

CHAPTER UPDATES

FAMILY MAINTENANCE ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM RETIREMENT

Congratulations to long-serving member Debra Padron on her retirement. Enjoy!

GOVERNMENT LICENSED PROFESSIONALS

AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORT

The auditor general released a report, An Audit of Compliance and Enforcement of the Mining Sector, in May that was highly critical of the BC government's mining inspections. The report pointed to a problem the PEA has been voicing for years, that without an adequate number of trained and licensed inspectors to do comprehensive inspections of mines, accidents will happen.

Among a host of issues, the report states that the Mount Polley accident could have been prevented had there been adequate inspections and an appropriate approvals process for work carried out at the mine. The PEA has sent letters to the deputy ministers

of the Ministry of Energy and Mines and the Ministry of Environment in response to the report.

MEETING WITH DEPUTY MINISTER

Our GLP chapter executive chair, Carl Withler, along with bargaining committee member and former GLP executive member Beth Eagles and PEA staff members Al Gallupe and Scott McCannell, met with the deputy minister for the Public Service Agency to discuss issues related to professional development, succession planning, training programs for new employees, recruitment and retention, dual postings and regular joint committee meetings. The meeting was an opportunity to meet the new deputy and review issues important to the PEA. Another meeting is planned for June 2, 2016.

LOCAL REPS

The GLP chapter has some new local reps. In Victoria, we are pleased to welcome Margaret Crowley and Baljeet

Mann as new local reps in the Ministry of Environment. We thank these three members for stepping up to do this valuable work.

In Williams Lake, Sam Davis will replace Harry Jennings, who is retiring. We thank Harry for his many years of service as a local rep, GLP executive member and PEA executive member. We wish him the best in his retirement.

In Port Alberni, Heidi Reinikka is replacing Mark Palmer in the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations. Mark is completing 20 years as a local rep for the PEA. Thank you to Mark for your years of service.

HEALTH SCIENCE PROFESSIONALS

PEA PSYCHOLOGISTS

The BC Labour Relations Board has ruled on the BC Nurses' Union (BCNU) application to represent PEA and HSA (Health Science Association) psychologists. The application was denied, and the votes cast will not be counted.

This means that PEA psychologists will remain in the PEA.



INTRODUCING SAM MONTGOMERY

Sam Montgomery is the labour relations officer servicing the Law Society, Legal Services Society, and UVic chapters while Melissa Moroz is on leave.

Sam holds a doctorate in psychology and women's studies from the University of Michigan, where she served as the president of her graduate employees' union, AFT Local 3550. She is a seasoned Canadian trade unionist and has previously worked in Ottawa as a researcher and advocate with the Canadian Association of University Teachers. More recently, Sam was the higher education field representative for the Vermont affiliate of the American Federation of Teachers, where she organized, bargained and lobbied for public service professionals across the state.

Sam is excited to be here in Victoria and looks forward to getting to know the members across the PEA. ■

The Board's reasons for denying the application focus on concerns related to the number of unions already in the bargaining association, the job-specific nature of the application and the potential harm the action could pose to the stability of the health sector.

"It is inherently problematic to have multiple bargaining agents administer a single collective agreement with a single employer, and the presence of multiple bargaining agents inhibits the day-to-day informal give-and-take necessary for successful labour relations," the ruling stated.

The PEA will continue to seek every opportunity within the Health Sciences Public Bargaining Association to advocate for psychologists and to work constructively with the HSA. We have heard the issues and concerns of our members, and we will bring them forward to the appropriate government stakeholders.

We're disappointed in the BCNU and their tactics, hence our decision to invest a substantial amount of resources into opposing this case at the Labour Relations Board. We believe PEA psychologists are better off in the PEA and that our lower dues structure, unique servicing model and long history with the HSPBA positions us to achieve the best possible wages and benefits for psychologists in future rounds of bargaining.

LAW SOCIETY LAWYERS

BENEFIT CHANGES

After consultation with PEA members, the LSL chapter has agreed to the employer's proposed change to our benefits plan. Starting July 1, 2016, PEA members will be covered under Equitable Life. In addition to lower long-term disability premiums, the plan offers a more



Jennifer Hollett was the keynote speaker at the 2016 education conference.

streamlined process for submitting claims. You can read more about the changes at <http://bit.ly/25qnL8J>.

OKANAGAN REGIONAL LIBRARIES

RETIREMENTS

Congratulations to Alice Richards and Fern Teleglow on their retirement. Alice worked for the ORL for nine years and Fern worked for the ORL for 28 years. Enjoy!

ST. MARGARET'S SCHOOL COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Members at St. Margaret's School have ratified a new collective agreement, with 96.1 per cent of the membership voting in favour of the agreement. Details of the agreement include increases to vacation leave and sick days, an increase in coverage for eye exams and glasses, a health spending account, introduction of a drug card, an increase in the employer's pension contribution, and a seven per cent general wage increase over five years. The agreement is in effect from July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2021. Full details of the agreement can be found on our website.

Thank you to all members for your support. A special thank you to the bargaining committee for their hard work throughout this process.

UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA POND PARTY

UVic members are invited to the social event of the summer—the Pond Party. The event takes place Wednesday, June 29, 4:30 to 7:00 p.m. in the Fireside Lounge at the University Club.

Members are welcome to bring a guest and their children. A selection of finger foods will be available. The bar will have the usual selection of wines, beers and soft drinks. A draw prize will be available for members.

ASSOCIATION NEWS

LOCAL REP TRAINING

Basic Local Rep Training
September 19-20, 2016
Victoria

Advanced Local Rep Training
November 21-22, 2016
Victoria

If you would like to register for any of the courses please contact our Membership Department via email to membership@pea.org. ■



JOIN THE PEA AT A
SUMMER EVENT

VICTORIA PRIDE PARADE
SUNDAY, JULY 10

VICTORIA LABOUR DAY PICNIC
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 5

FIND OUT MORE AND SIGN-UP AT
PEA.ORG/EVENTS





BCFED & CLC AFFILIATION

IN MAY 85% OF VOTING
MEMBERS CHOSE TO CONTINUE
AFFILIATION WITH THE
BC FEDERATION OF LABOUR AND
CANADIAN LABOUR CONGRESS