

Fall 2014

Greetings!

Our first “Unifor” year has been incredible. Bringing our two unions together into one has been an amazing learning experience for members, activists, leaders and staff. Together we’ve been developing a new identity and a new appreciation for what it means to be a union with workers in every sector of the economy and strong in every part of Canada. We know that times of change are rich for learning – thinking through and re-committing to core principles and values, and at the same time opening up to new ways of doing things.

Here in the Education Department we’re really proud of what we’ve been able to accomplish in our first year – we now have a fantastic group of trained peer educators (Discussion Leaders) from right across the country representing all sectors of our new union. We have a whole roster of week-long intensive Unifor courses that we offer at our Education Centre in Port Elgin, and we have a fantastic set of programs that we are running in communities from coast to coast. Almost all of our programs are “Uniforized” and speak to the histories of both our former unions and the needs and priorities of both our new union. And we are even developing new programs, like our new 3-day Collective Bargaining course, and new courses for trustees and for accident investigators.

The saying goes, if we build it they will come. Our programs are ready. In the coming year a lot of our energy will be going into working with local unions, Education Committees, and regional offices to strengthen our area schools, and into making sure we do the outreach needed so that our week long programs at our Education Centre are really well-accessed by our members. We look forward to launching our new core program in 2015 and we’re also excited about launching a new “Get to Know Your Union” program, along with new resources for union members. No doubt there is more growth ahead of us, but we look forward to working with you to build on all that we have accomplished so far!

Family Education Program

Can you imagine taking a week-long *edu-vacation* with your family on the shores of Lake Huron – lodging, meals and transportation* provided? That’s just what a hundred and forty Unifor

members and their families did this summer. For three weeks during July and August our Education Centre was filled with Unifor members and their families combining learning about the union with recreational activities, for a vacation like no other. Participants learned from each other and from guest speakers about environmental, workplace, political, human rights, and social issues that affect not only our communities, but working people around the world. Teenagers participated in their own program *which* focused on social justice issues, younger kids were at ‘camp’ with their own counselors, and little ones spent their days in ECE-supervised childcare.

For information on how to apply to next year’s program, check out our website at www.unifor.org/education-en (English) and www.unifor.org/education-fr (French). To help spread the word about Family Ed, contact the Education Department at education@unifor.org to receive a copy of our new Family Ed promo video to show at union meetings (the video is in its final stages of development – order your copy in advance!).

*transportation costs are covered for those who live more than 500 km from Port Elgin, Ontario

Bargaining Paid Education Leave

Congratulations to our members at Resolute Forestry (over 1000 workers) and at Carswell (membership of 6) who have successfully bargained Paid Education Leave (PEL) for the first time – a great reminder that workplaces big and small can negotiate access to union education!

The idea of paid education leave is both simple and remarkable: in addition to negotiating wages and benefits, we can negotiate money from the employer that we can then use to educate our members, activists and leaders on union and social justice issues. And, we can get an agreement from the employer that allows workers time off to attend our programs (and we use the PEL money to pay their wages so they’re not out-of-pocket when they’re taking a union course at our Education Centre).

Education Department Changes

We'd like to take this opportunity to welcome Paul Keighley and Sam Vrankulj to the Unifor Education Department. Paul has been involved in union education for over 20 years on staff with the former CEP and Sam (Unifor Local 5555) has been working with the Unifor-McMaster program for the past decade.

We'd also like to thank Dawn Van Nostrand for her work with the Education Department over the past year; Dawn is returning to her job as a service rep in the union, and we will especially miss her sense of humour! And, we'd be remiss if we didn't also thank Bruce Roberts who has been enjoying his first year of retirement from our Department.

Robin Fairchild Clennell will now be taking the lead for the Department on area courses and is really looking forward to connecting with local union education committees over the coming months. It's time to take our area courses to a new level – we've got a whole roster of courses ready to roll and we want to work together to find the right formula in your community that will ensure that as many members, activists and leaders as possible get access to the education they want and need. Robin can be contacted at robin.fairchild@unifor.org.

Guide for Workplace Representatives, Stewards, Committeepeople

Our pocket guide for Workplace Reps is ready! This guide expands on previous versions offered by both our former unions, and offers a comprehensive print resource for stewards – the front-line of our union! To order copies, email our National Office Workroom at NationalPurchasing@unifor.org or fill out the on-line form at <http://www.unifor.org/orderform>. Please help spread the word that the new guide is available!

HIV/AIDS booklet & poster

HIV/AIDS is a workplace issue – help make this point by distributing our Unifor HIV/AIDS booklet and by putting up our “Q: Anyone? A: Anyone” poster in your local union office and workplace bulletin boards. Education is our greatest defense not only against HIV/AIDS, but against the stigma and discrimination that all too often stop people from protecting themselves and/or getting the support and treatment they need.

To order copies of the booklet and poster, email our Workroom at Unifor National office at national.purchasing@unifor.org or fill out the on-line form at <http://www.unifor.org/orderform>.

Member mini-guide to unions

We are excited to announce that we're in the final stages of producing a “mini-guide” to Unifor. This fold-out pamphlet explains what a union is, what to do if you have a workplace problem, how collective bargaining works, why unions are involved in community and political issues, and much, much more. Every member should have one.

To order copies, email our Workroom at Unifor National office at NationalPurchasing@unifor.org or fill out the on-line form at <http://www.unifor.org/orderform>.

New Discussion Leaders

In July we trained forty new Unifor Discussion Leaders – a fantastic, collective accomplishment! These folks will join our existing pool of Discussion Leaders in delivering union education right across the country and at our Education Centre in Port Elgin. Our new Discussion Leaders come from all different sectors of the union – they are a diverse group of individuals with incredible talents and they hail from coast to coast. Congratulations to all those who were selected for this training; we're excited to be working with you! Discussion Leader training in Quebec is scheduled for September.

New 3-day Collective Bargaining Program

We're excited to announce that this fall we will be launching our new 3-day Collective Bargaining Program. While our most intensive courses are week-long (and held at our Education Centre in Port Elgin), we recognize not all of our members can access these courses, and so in a number of key areas we have developed 3-day versions of our courses that can be delivered closer to home: Collective Bargaining, Grievance Handling, Human Rights, and Workers' Compensation (in most jurisdictions).

Here's the description for the new program:

In this 3-day Collective Bargaining program we will focus on maximizing our bargaining power by developing a strategic approach to bargaining. We will discuss the importance of preparation including generating proposals from the membership, assessing the climate of bargaining, building a strong committee, determining bargaining priorities and developing a strong proposal package.

Through a role play activity, participants will have an opportunity to draft contract language, negotiate an agreement and deepen their understanding around the role of the bargaining committee throughout negotiations. We will discuss the ratification process and the role of the committee in presenting a tentative agreement to members. Attention will also be given to the importance of collective bargaining as an opportunity to engage

members, connect members to the union and, as a result, strengthen the local union.

This program will provide bargaining committee members with a solid foundation for their work at the bargaining table.

See our webpage www.unifor.org/education to find out when the 3-day Collective Bargaining course is being offered in your area. If you don't see it on your schedule, talk with your local union Education Committee – they can get in touch with our department so we can plan to make it available.

Getting to Know Your “New” Union

This one-day course provides a basic introduction to Unifor and provides an overview of who we are, what we do, how the union works, and how we help build our communities and contribute to a stronger, more democratic and more compassionate society.

This course is ideal for anyone who wants to better understand our new union - whether they're new to the union or have been a member of a union for a long time. The course will run across the country beginning this November. Check out our course schedules at www.unifor.org/education. Local unions wanting more information on how to bring this course to your community can contact Robin Fairchild Clennell at robin.fairchild@unifor.org.

Unifor-McMaster Labour Studies Certificate Program

If you are a Unifor member working at CAMI, Chrysler, Ford, or General Motors, you are eligible to participate in our Unifor-Mac Program. This unique educational partnership between our union and McMaster University offers courses that cover a wide range of topics including the political economy, social issues, labour and the arts, and several basic skills courses for those wishing to pursue further study. Courses are offered through in-class, video conference, and self-paced online formats. Courses are currently delivered to Unifor members from “Detroit 3” locals in Windsor, Ingersoll, Brampton, Oshawa, Oakville, Hamilton, and St Catharines.

We have a full line-up of courses scheduled for the Fall 2014 term, including a video conference course exploring the growth of the Federal Temporary Migrant Worker Program, and a course on Canada's changing foreign policy objectives under the Harper Conservative government. In addition, a variety of in-class courses are scheduled in each of our program locations. *A limited number of scholarships covering tuition and all course-related costs are available to Unifor members employed in non-auto workplaces.*

For more information including course schedules, descriptions, and details about how you can participate, please visit www.labourstudies.mcmaster.ca or email Sam Vrankulj, Unifor Education Department, at sam.vrankulj@unifor.org

Local Union Trustee Course

We're pleased to announce that in June we officially launched our new one day Local Union Trustee course (English). This course is designed to provide Trustees with the tools they need to carry out the critical function that they have as internal auditors within the Local Union.

The course will be on the Fall/Winter education schedule in a number of locations. Please check our website (www.unifor.org/education) for a full course description.

Training for trustees is included in the Quebec Financial Officer Training course (French). For more information see: www.uniforquebec.org or contact Serge Dupont (serge.dupont@unifor.org).

News from our Quebec Education Program

In May and June we conducted a survey of local unions and we're confident that our educational program will meet the needs identified! We will be offering seventy-seven courses in Quebec this year, including grievance handling, stewards, health and safety etc. Programs will run in Abitibi, Gatineau, Montreal, Trois-Rivières, Quebec, Saguenay, North Shore and Gaspé. At our Education Centre we will be offering Collective Bargaining, Grievance Handling, Health & Safety (including Ergonomics and Anti-Harassment), Workplace Noise, Women's Activist, and Youth Activist.

We're already looking forward to Family Education in the summer of 2015; details of this wonderful adventure will be sent in December to the locals.

Union in the Schools Program

“All About Unions” is a one-hour presentation for high school students that can be delivered by local union activists in their communities. On Saturday, April 5, 22 people from Unifor Locals in the GTA and Sudbury took part in the first training session, and began running the course in late spring in Ontario high schools.

This interactive presentation covers the who, what, why, when, and how of the union movement, with a strong focus on why unions are central to meeting the challenges faced by young people today and in the future and how a union can make sure workers

are treated fairly, paid decently, and guaranteed healthy and safe workplaces.

The presentation includes a role-playing game and multimedia illustrations of union values and the role unions can play in transforming society (including the incredible history of union contributions to equality, medicare, pensions, and health and safety). It is designed to aid locals in building ties with students and teachers in your community. In particular we hope members of young workers committees will play a prominent role as facilitators. For more information on how to bring this program to schools in your area, contact Tony Leah in the Education Department.

New Accident Investigation Training Course

The new Unifor Accident and Incident Investigation Course is now available at the Unifor Education Centre in Port Elgin, Ontario. This program gives clear and concise information on how to effectively interview witnesses, chart accident cause and effects and identify appropriate corrective and preventive actions.

We also take time to better understand the disadvantages of “Behaviour Based Safety Programs” and how to support prevention through legislative deterrents including C-45.

Next offering is October 2014! See our website for a full course description and course calendar: www.unifor.org/education-en. All locals are eligible to attend - either through negotiated Paid Education Leave (PEL) or the 50/50 cost-sharing program.

Environmental Outreach Program 2014

This year marked the fifteenth year that we have partnered with the Workers Health and Safety Centre to develop and present environmental information for Canadian youth in secondary schools.

Our program this year reached out to more than 2,600 students from Ontario to Alberta to focus on Unifor’s call for a National Energy and Environmental Strategy as outlined in the recommendations recently passed at our Regional Councils. Congratulations to everyone involved! For more information on how to get involved next year, contact Ken Bondy in the Education Department, ken.bondy@unifor.org.

Where can I find out more information about our union’s education programs?

For courses offered in English and French outside Quebec check out our website (www.unifor.org/education). The website provides course descriptions and information on when and where our courses are offered and there’s also a ‘frequently asked questions’ page about area schools and about programs offered at our Unifor Education Centre. For more information, please contact us at education@unifor.org. For programs offered in Quebec check out our website: www.uniforquebec.org, or contact us at serge.dupont@unifor.org.

Join us on Facebook!

Our Unifor Education facebook page is a great place to find information about our upcoming programs and to find photos from recent programs. Like us anytime you like!
www.facebook.com/uniforeducation
