

WLUSA Newsletter

Your Union at Work



Record turnout for Waterloo Region Labour Council labour day event in Waterloo Park! Left: Victoria MacKenzie (Grievance Officer), Centre: Sandra Dalpe (President), Right: Alake Mills (Equity, Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression Officer)

President’s Message

Bargaining, Member Adovacy and Looking Ahead.

----- SANDRA DALPE

Welcome back to fall at Laurier!

After a relatively quiet summer, the arrival of thousands of students has brought renewed energy and activity across our campuses. I hope everyone feels energized, refreshed and prepared for the months ahead.

As we begin the fall term, I wanted to provide an update on some of the work that has been taking place over the summer and highlight a few priorities for the coming months.

Bargaining Continues.

Throughout the summer, your union representatives have continued working to return to the bargaining table and represent the interests and priorities of our members. We met with the university on several days in June and again throughout August, with July set aside due to various holiday schedules.

As we move forward, compensation remains an important issue. The rising cost of groceries, housing, gas and other essentials continues to put significant pressure on workers and

families. Many of us are being asked to do more with less, and that is not sustainable.

At the same time, we continue to see significant salary increases in other areas of the university. It is reasonable for our members to ask why their increases remain substantially lower.

Our work at the bargaining table is about more than numbers. It is about ensuring that the work our members do is properly valued and that our collective agreement reflects the realities we face today.

Advocacy and the Status of Women Committee.

At the provincial council meeting in June, I was appointed as the Provincial Council Liaison for the Status of Women Committee.

In this role, I will attend committee meetings, provide reports to Provincial Council and bring forward recommendations or issues identified by the committee. Our first meeting is coming up this week, and I am looking

Members reject tentative agreement. 77% in opposition.

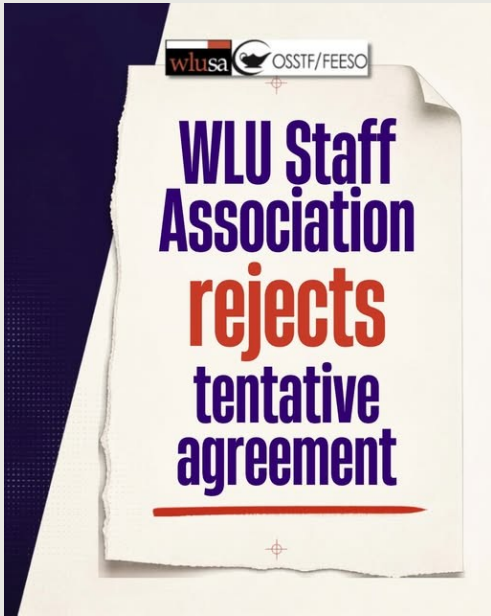
After reviewing the tentative agreement as presented by the Chief Negotiator on September 2nd, 2026, the WLUSA membership overwhelmingly voted to reject the proposed agreement, with 77% voting in opposition.

The Bargaining Team will be returning to the university with a clear mandate from members to seek improvements to the tentative agreement.

Ontario's collective bargaining process provides for continued bargaining and, where appropriate, conciliation and mediation before a legal strike or lockout can occur.

The Bargaining Team will provide further updates as negotiations with the university resume. They plan to communicate with members as transparently as possible while still respecting the confidentiality of the bargaining process.

Your Bargaining Team returns to the negotiating table on Monday, September 14th, 2026, and our local has a scheduled conciliation meeting on Tuesday, September 15th with an Ontario government appointed conciliator.



Record turnout for our ratification meeting. The above image was used in a Facebook post that had over five thousand views.

forward to learning more about the committee’s priorities and the work being planned.

There is also a conference planned for later this year, and I am hopeful that I will have the opportunity to participate and bring those experiences back to our members.

Supporting Members.

Over the past few months, a number of member concerns have come forward. Two recurring issues have been workload and short-term disability claims that are denied after the fact.

These are important issues that require meaningful discussion. Members should not feel that they are facing these challenges alone, and we will continue to advocate for fair treatment and for the rights and protections provided under our collective agreement.

More broadly, we need to continue examining the concept of wage slavery and what it means in today’s workplace. When employees are continually asked to take on additional responsibilities without appropriate recognition or compensation, it is important that we question whether the system is working fairly for everyone.

Professional Development Fund.

A reminder to members that our Professional Development Fund provides approximately \$55,000 each year for professional development opportunities.

Unfortunately, the fund has not been utilized to its full potential. In some years, even \$10,000 of the available funding has been difficult to spend.

I hope that our next collective agreement will continue to provide this benefit and that we can have a broader conversation about how to make the fund more accessible and useful to members.

If you have ideas about professional development opportunities or ways we could improve awareness and use of the fund, please share them with us.

Learning and Leadership.

Professional development is not just about funding — it is also about developing our skills as union members and leaders.

This summer, I had the opportunity to attend the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) School, a week-long program

covering a variety of labour-related topics. I chose the Women in Leadership stream and found the experience extremely valuable.

I also attended the OSSTF Union Leadership Academy in August. This was my second year attending the academy. While it was a little challenging to navigate and understand everything the first time around, returning for a second year made the experience much more meaningful and helped everything come together.

These opportunities provide valuable education, networking and perspective that can be brought back to our local union work.

Standing Together.

As members, we are part of a broader labour movement, and solidarity remains one of our greatest strengths. OSSTF/FEESO is also bargaining, and we stand with them in solidarity. You may have seen our union lawn signs promoting the message “Together for publicly funded education.”

These messages are a reminder that collective action matters. When workers stand together, we have a stronger voice in advocating for fairness, respect and better working conditions.

Your Union Is Here for You.

Whatever your issue, question or concern, please remember that you can reach out to me or any member of the executive.

Your council representatives are also available to listen, provide support and, when necessary, move concerns through the appropriate channels.

Our goal is simple: to be watchful, supportive and helpful so that members do not lose the rights and benefits provided through our collective agreement.

If something does not seem right, please do not hesitate to ask. It is always better to raise a question early than to allow an

issue to become more difficult later.

What is Coming Next.

In the coming months, please make a habit of checking the Members Only section of our website regularly.

We will be sharing projects, opportunities and, hopefully, savings and other benefits for members. We want this space to be a more transparent and useful way of communicating information and ensuring that members have access to resources that may benefit them.

Thank You.

Finally, I want to take a moment to recognize each and every Member for your hard work and dedication to Laurier.

You do an incredible amount to support the university, and much of what you accomplish may not even appear in your formal job description. Those contributions matter. They help Laurier function, they support our students and colleagues, and they deserve recognition.

So, if your manager has not said it lately, let me say it: Good job. Thank you. Your work is appreciated.

On behalf of myself and the entire executive, I wish everyone a safe, successful and productive fall term.

Let’s continue to support one another, stand together and work toward a better future for all our Members.

Exclusive home and auto insurance discounts from OTIP!



Brokers are here to ensure you get personalized service and exclusive education group discounts for all your insurance needs. Get a quote to receive a \$20 gift card: <https://bit.ly/4zLlgO8>

Seeking Volunteers!

Join our mentoring initiative.



Dear colleague,

We are looking for WLUSA members to join our mentoring initiative! This is a group of dedicated WLUSA members who would like to connect and act as mentors to new members of our union.

Mentors will connect with new members as part of their new member orientation. Mentoring is one of the most valuable investments an organization can make. Every conversation you have, every question you ask, and every experience you share contributes to a stronger, more connected Association. The role of mentor is not to have the answers but to listen, encourage and support. Whether your mentee is new to Laurier, new to WLUSA, or simply looking for guidance from someone with more experience, your willingness to invest your time can have a lasting impact. We will train you over an informative supper and provide you with materials. Once trained we will meet with all mentors and mentees (new members) and do a number of activities.

When experienced members intentionally support newer members, everyone benefits.

Our commitment to you:

- We will provide you training and feed you during our sessions
- We will give you the resources you need
- We will connect you with a new member
- We will provide you with a letter about your leadership that you can add to a resume or your site file

Your commitment to us:

- Join our training session
- Meet with your mentee in a general introduction session
- Connect with your mentor at a few mutually agreed upon times over the course of the year
- Share your wisdom and be a resource for new members

If you are interested in becoming a member please connect with:

Bruce Alexander
(balexander@wlu.ca)

Your mentor leadership team:

Bruce Alexander
VP Internal

Bethany Correia
Council Rep

Did You Know?

Members can take an Educational Leave or a Professional Development Leave to advance their skills and resume?

Per Article 25.7, all Members having five (5) or more years of service at Laurier are eligible for up to two (2) years of Educational Leave for the purpose of completing a college or university education. Throughout the leave period, Members will receive twenty-five percent (25%) of their current salary. Upon their return, Members will resume their former position with full salary and benefits.

If you are seeking development outside of a college or university setting, per Article 25.13, all Members having five (5) or more years of service at Laurier are eligible for a Professional Development Leave of up to six (6) months. Throughout the leave period, Members will receive seventy-five percent (75%) of their current salary. Upon their return, Members will resume their former position with full salary and benefits.

Take advantage of this benefit to invest in your growth and professional development!



Members Needed.

Join in a Consitution Review.

Dear colleague,

This fall, I am seeking members to join me in a Constitution Review Committee. The purposes of this committee is to review best practices in all bargaining units in OSSTF and conduct a comparative analysis with our Constitution. The goals of the committee are to determine if we can develop language that is more friendly to read for members and to analyze best practices in terms of how other units conduct their

business and to bring forward recommendations to the Executive, Council of Representatives and the membership by February of 2027. The requirement will be for members to meet between 3-5 times over the course of the year at a mutually agreeable time. If you have any questions or would like to join this committee, please email:

Bruce Alexander, VP Internal at balexander@wlu.ca or balexander@wlusa.ca



Finding colleagues behind the grill at the Labour Day picnic. Left photo from left to right: Tracy Cochrane (Admissions), Ryan Doyle (ICT). Right photo from left to right: Unknown (WRLC), Bruce Alexander (Education), Doug Roberts (Library)

Labour Day Picnic a Waterloo Hit!

Record turnout for the annual Ed Weidinger Memorial event.

----- RYAN DOYLE

WATERLOO — The Waterloo Park was buzzing on Monday, September 7, 2026, as the Waterloo Region Labour Council hosted its annual Ed Weidinger Memorial Labour Day Picnic. Featuring a crowd-pleasing "Loonie Lunch," the event drew the largest crowd in its history. Families enjoyed a vibrant lineup of live music, inflatables, face painting, and balloon artists. All proceeds from the day are being donated to the United Way.

The historic turnout was confirmed at the Labour Council's September 8th meeting. The crowd's massive

appetite completely wiped out the food supply, including 500 veggie samosas, 800 hamburgers, and all but one box of the 600 hot dogs grilled. Keeping up with the hungry crowd were our very own local members, Tracy Cochrane (Admissions) and the legendary Doug Roberts (Library), who stepped up to volunteer behind the grills. Our local also set up shop inside the OSSTF tent, handing out colouring activities, candy and rubber ducks to kids while chatting with community members about WLUSA. They were joined by a strong showing of fellow labour unions, including Unifor, CUPE, and the United Steelworkers to name a few who provided information resources, colouring activities, and candy.

FEATURING A PANEL DISCUSSION, PLUS Q&As

SAVE THE DATE

State of Education Town Hall

Thursday, October 1 at 6:30pm

Knox Waterloo Presbyterian Church, 50 Erb St W

Catherine Fife, MPP Waterloo – [Reserve your seat here!](#)