



**UNION OF TAXATION EMPLOYEES - PSAC  
SYNDICAT DES EMPLOYÉ-E-S DE L'IMPÔT - AFPC**

233, rue Gilmour St., Suite 800  
Ottawa, ON K2P 0P2  
Tel.: (613) 235-6704  
Fax.: (613) 234-7290  
[www.ute-sei.org](http://www.ute-sei.org)

**CONGRÈS 2017 CONVENTION  
JULY 19 - 22 JUILLET  
OTTAWA, ON**

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT  
TO THE NATIONAL CONVENTION  
2017**

This is the last time that I have the honour of presenting a President's Report to our National Triennial Convention. This report will cover the Stewardship of the Office of President for the last three years.

Under the By-Laws of UTE, specifically By-Law 10, the duties outlined for the Office of President are as follows:

**DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

**Section 1- President**

The President shall:

- (1) represent UTE on the National Board of Directors of the PSAC as required by the Constitution;
- (2)
  - (a) uphold the Constitution of the PSAC and the By-Laws of UTE;
  - (b) preside at all meetings and Conventions;
  - (c) be an ex-officio member of all Committees;
  - (d) perform all duties that are incidental to the office of President;
- (3) be responsible to the Executive Committee, to the Executive Council and to the Convention;
- (4) make written reports on the administration of the office and on the affairs of UTE to each regular meeting of the Executive Council and to each Convention;

- (5) be responsible for the administrative management, control and allocation of staff in the National Office;
- (6) be responsible for the receipt and keeping of all monies of UTE along with their disbursement under the direction of the Executive Council;
- (7) ensure that notices and agendas of each Executive Council, Executive Committee meeting, Presidents' Conference and Convention are prepared and circulated in advance;
- (8) be responsible for the minutes of all meetings of the Executive Council, Executive Committee and Presidents' Conferences and will countersign them along with the first Vice-President;
- (9) be responsible for the preparation of a complete record of any Convention;
- (10) ensure that copies of minutes of the Executive Council or Executive Committee meetings are sent to each Local within four (4) weeks and ensure that the record of any Convention is sent to each Local within four (4) months;
- (11) ensure that the National Office provides services in both official languages;
- (12) ensure that UTE directives, policies and procedures are updated and subsequently forwarded to Locals; and
- (13) discharge all duties and obligations imposed upon them by Convention and/or the Executive Council.

Although the Office of the President is directed by the specific duties listed in our By-Laws, direction and/or guidance is also received from the supreme governing body of our organization, our Triennial Convention, the Executive Council, Executive Committee, Presidents' Conference, Locals and UTE members.

I have tabled written reports at each of the scheduled Executive Council meetings since the last convention, which were published with the minutes of the meetings.

It has been a busy three years for the membership, local executives and stewards, as well as the national executive. Much of the work of our national officers and local executives has kept them occupied on an almost full-time basis. Our employer has kept us busy and active and our membership demands the excellent representation that they have come to expect from their union, the Union of Taxation Employees.

I would like to formally thank the membership for their support of their union. It must be stated clearly that without the membership, we could not accomplish anything. Our membership has shown repeatedly their commitment to achieving what is important to them. Their support in our endeavors directly affects the outcome of our efforts. This was true while we were at the negotiating table for four years, as well as at the time of writing of this report, as we returned to negotiate the reopener clause. We have had many activities and meetings, both during our consultations with the CRA management at all levels, or just attending our Local meetings. We must always make sure that our membership is engaged in their union.

The local executives and stewards deserve recognition, as they are the front line of the union for the membership. They are the ones who listen to members, represent them at the initial stages, deliver the union message and conduct the votes and campaigns. Their work is invaluable to the organization. The success of activism at the Local level can, in large part, be attributed to the local executives and stewards. I know that at times it feels like a thankless job but dedication, caring, drive, and perseverance always keeps us going. The CRA recognizes that we are not a union to be taken for granted.

I want to thank the members of the Executive Council. They are all opinionated, passionate and very vocal, to say the least. However, for the past three years, I can say that we have worked together as a unit regardless of any differences of opinion. We experienced a significant change in the members on the National Executive, which brought a different dynamic to the table. Nonetheless, focus, resolve, and dedication remained as the foundation for their efforts.

Finally, I would also like to thank the National Office staff for their contribution to the Union of Taxation Employees. Their daily work and their efforts with the National Committees remains exemplary. We have had some new additions to our staff over the last three years: Sister Andrea Holmes, Brothers David Girard and Mathieu Juneau as Labour Relations Officers; Sisters Christiane Pagé and Connie Nuñez as Administrative Support; and Brother Liam Merrigan as Assistant Finance Administration Officer. Also, Sisters Debbie Ferguson and Kayla Minor worked for us temporarily as Labour Relations Officers when we were short and both did an excellent job. I wish them both all the best. In June of this year Sister Louise James retired. We wish her all the best on a well-earned retirement and thank her for her dedication and hard work.

I would now like to look back on some of the major issues that we have faced since our last Convention.

### **Negotiations:**

We finally completed a long process of collective bargaining and signed an agreement on October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016. We started negotiations in July of 2012 with the exchange of demands. The membership, the Executive Council and the Bargaining Team worked to make sure they received a fair and equitable contract. With all the pressures from management and from within the union itself, they stood strong and showed the government and management that this union would not be pushed around and would not just roll over to their pressure tactics. Congratulations to you all.

## **Finances:**

I fully support the changes that have been introduced over the last three years to better manage spending and our assets. We need to continue to watch our funds, control our spending, account for our expenses and plan for the future. We should always be looking 4 or 5 years ahead.

The state of the PSAC's finances is also very important to UTE members. Effective financial control and monitoring within the PSAC is one of the issues that UTE delegates demand at every PSAC Convention. It is necessary if UTE members are to get value for their dues.

## **Communication:**

I know that we have continued to improve our communications with the membership over the last three years. The following are **some** of our activities in that regard:

- The invaluable work of our Communications Committee;
- The UTE Newsletter;
- The "Subscribe" system on our website;
- The timely updating of our website;
- Our new and improved website;
- The continued updating and distribution of our publications;
- The continued training aspect of our Presidents' Conferences;
- The UTE training courses and sessions on specific issues that are conducted either nationally or regionally;
- The updating of our computer and technology needs;
- The reporting of the work of all of our Committees;
- Our Regional and National Conferences

## **PSAC National Board of Directors (NBOD):**

As National President of the Union of Taxation Employees, I am a member of the National Board of Directors (NBOD) of the Alliance where I represent the interests of our members. The Board meets three times a year. I have voted in accordance with UTE policies and in the best interests of our members on all issues. Brother Marc Brière is always present at the meetings, providing not only input and counsel, but also providing an additional set of eyes and ears so that nothing is missed.

There are times I feel like a lone wolf at these sessions and I often struggle with the decisions taken there. It has become obvious over the years that less of the business of the PSAC is done through the NBOD and is instead handled by the Alliance Executive Committee (AEC) behind closed doors. Rest assured, however, I have always voted with the UTE membership in mind.

## **UTE Committees:**

The committees have been extremely active in pursuing their mandates and reporting to the membership through their minutes or Executive Council Reports. Bulletins and/or Memoranda have always been issued in a timely fashion to and for the Local membership. The Committees all work toward improving not only their respective product but also strive to communicate results and/or collect necessary input more effectively. Most of the Committees are autonomous with the Chairs keeping the National President informed of their progress.

## **Executive Council Activities:**

The following is a list of **some** of the items that the Council has dealt with over the last three years:

- Increased the list of approved Non-UTE Events;
- The unfinished business from the last Convention;
- Adopted the Committee assignments;
- Continued to support the International Children's Awareness (ICA) organization both financially and by sending volunteers to work with Major Smith each year (one fully funded student and one subsidized member) and also decided that if, in a given year UTE does not receive a qualified applicant for a student and/or member, the monies that would have been spent be donated to ICA directly;
- Maintained UTE resolutions of record;
- Created two new Locals in the NCR to help alleviate some of the problems with reaching the members in that region;
- Reallocated and/or approved overspending on budget line items, as required;
- Adopted several recommendations from the Honours and Awards Committee to present various awards;
- Adopted proposed changes to the By-Laws and Regulations to submit to this Convention;
- Met with the CRA Management at the regional and national levels on a variety of topics. Due to the protracted contract negotiations, the union did not participate in joint committee work for an extended period covered by this report, except for where we were legally required to, or where we were obliged to protect the contractual rights of the members.

## **Health and Safety:**

The UTE Standing Committee on Safety and Health held a National Conference November 5 – 8<sup>th</sup>, 2015 in Ottawa. The Committee worked very hard and produced a conference that was both very informative and also provided participants with a vast amount of valuable information for their own workplace committees. My thanks for a job well done.

## **Equity:**

Three Regional Equal Opportunities Conferences were held at various times and in various cities in 2015, as a prelude to the National Conference. These proved to be a great learning opportunity for many equity activists across the country. The Equal Opportunities National Conference was held on October 13 – 16<sup>th</sup> 2016 and from the evaluations that were received, it was a great success. The organizers should be very proud. To my knowledge, the UTE is one of the first Components to provide such conferences for their membership. Every member is welcome and there is no one who does not learn, teach, or share something at these conferences. We are an inclusive union that attempts to educate the membership on all issues. The Union is a part of equity and equity is a part of our Union.

## **FINAL COMMENTS**

As a member of Council, I have had the opportunity to work with a group of very dedicated people and for that I thank them all. While the nature and responsibilities of our work is sometimes controversial, we have remained a cohesive and respectful group, always working in the best interest of the membership.

This is a time when our Locals must be the strongest they can be. We must be open and proactive leaders and most importantly, encourage and allow membership involvement. The Locals, with the help of their membership, are the key to our success. They must become part of the solution.

Remember - all you need to know can be learned from Noah's Ark:

1. Don't miss the boat.
2. Don't forget that we're all in the same boat.
3. Plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the ark.
4. Stay fit. When you're 600 years old, someone might ask you to do something really big.
5. Don't listen to critics; just get on with what has to be done.
6. Build your future on high ground.
7. For safety's sake, travel in pairs.
8. Two heads are better than one.
9. Speed isn't always an advantage; the snails were on board with the cheetahs.
10. When you're stressed, float a while.
11. Remember that the Ark was built by amateurs; the Titanic was built by professionals.
12. Remember that woodpeckers inside are a larger threat than the storm outside.

I want to highlight a major challenge we continue to have regarding Local infighting. Let me start by offering the following quote from Sister Bannon's 2011 President's Report to Convention:

*“However, I continue to see local executives spending a lot of time and energy fighting among themselves. This is neither productive nor healthy for the membership of a local. The only ones that this hurt is the membership and it certainly does nothing for the credibility of the organization with the employer. Hours and hours are expended by local, regional and national officers dealing with this issue and it has to stop. We do not have to be best friends and like everyone to work effectively with them. This was something that I addressed at the first Presidents’ Conference after I was elected twelve years ago and it seems that no matter how many times I try to address it, it still doesn’t go away and frankly I am at my wits end on this issue. If you are involved because it is all about “you” then you are not here for the right reasons. There is no “ME” in UNION!*

*But all I have been hearing for awhile is me, me, me what is in it for me? That attitude is not THE UTE WAY! Our members should be the first and last thought on everything that we do and in the decisions that we make. Our membership should be the reason and motivation for everything we do, including why we are involved”.*

And yet, local infighting continues to be the greatest challenge in our union. This problem has been going on for far too long. We do not seem to be able to get through to some people. It is time for all to look inwards at themselves and determine why they are involved. Over the last three years, I have seen locals almost destroyed from infighting, laziness and lack of leadership. I have personally witnessed members or past executive officers whose prime objective has been to destroy the Local from within, merely to show that they are the ones that should be the Executive. Most of these have been for very selfish reasons or personal vendettas. The membership deserves better. These types of actions are despicable and only hurt the true meaning of unionism. We are here for the members - to work on their behalf, to treat people with respect and dignity, and not for self validation or to belittle someone else. When you hear of people who complain about other executive officers, or who put others down, or who are obstacles to stop progress, know this is not for the membership but for these persons only. We need to stand for the members. I have been involved in the union since February of 1975. I have held almost every possible position and one thing I have always done is look at everything through a membership filter - how this will affect the members?

I would be remiss if I did not take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank Sister Pierrette Labrie, Sister Annette Melanson, and Brother Shane O’Brien for their many contributions and continued support over the past three years.

Also to my family, that have always been there for me, and I am so proud of my daughter Angela who is here at this convention, and who is the Chief Shop Steward of her Local - some one to carry on the family values. To my wife Gesine, I would never have been able to get through the last six years with out you, my heart and soul belong to you. Thank you, my love.

Thank you all from the bottom of my heart.

The above is a broad overview of some of the work that I have been involved in over the last three years. It has been my true pleasure working for the benefit of UTE. Being a member of UTE is both an honour and a privilege. Thank you all for giving me this great opportunity and honour to represent you as the UTE National President.

To end, I will quote Abraham Lincoln:

*The strongest bond of human sympathy outside the family relation should be one uniting working people of all nations and tongues and kindreds.*

Respectfully submitted and in solidarity always,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Robert Campbell". The signature is fluid and stylized, with a large initial "R" and "C".

Robert Campbell  
National President