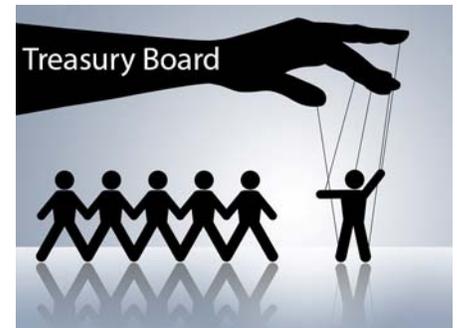




## MESSAGE FROM THE NATIONAL PRESIDENT

At the time of writing this article, we are over two weeks away from returning to the table to hopefully negotiate a fair contract for our members. This has been a long and frustrating process. Members from across the country have told us to stay strong; don't give up our benefits; keep up the fight.

We previously completed two contracts before they expired. People ask why we can not do this again. The answer is simple - it is no longer two sides trying to negotiate, but rather CRA is being mandated by Treasury Board in respect to all aspects of collective bargaining. For this reason, to date CRA has continued to say no to anything above the first and only monetary offer that was made three years ago. The members want this done, as does the team, but you have to have someone to negotiate with.



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We cannot sign a contract that eliminates benefits without a fair trade-off. Moreover, the proposed "me-too" clause that was included in the employer's final offer of May 2015, would require our wages to be decided by another public service bargaining group, the results of which we would be bound by in a process over which we have no input or control. This could potentially make you wait for as long as another four years before you get paid your wage increases for the "me-too" clause.

Members unfortunately get frustrated with the union for not settling the contract. They wonder why have we not just gone into a locked room and not come out until an agreement is reached. That sounds good, but we would be all alone in such an endeavour. We need the Government of Canada (Treasury Board) to allow the CRA to negotiate and make their own decisions.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all the Locals and members that have worked so hard to show their support for the team and stood behind them during this round of bargaining. We are all very appreciative of these efforts, from putting up signs to holding rallies, filing grievances etc.

### **This is what got us back at the table.**

I remain hopeful that we will be successful during the next negotiation meetings, scheduled for April 25 to 27. Regardless, I know that the membership will continue to support the team.

In Solidarity,

**Robert Campbell**  
*National President*

**SI VOUS PRÉFÉREZ RECEVOIR CETTE PUBLICATION EN FRANÇAIS,  
VEUILLEZ VOUS ADRESSER À VOTRE PRÉSIDENT- E DE SECTION LOCALE**

## UTE SCHOLARSHIPS

Every year, the Union of Taxation Employees (UTE) offers two (2) national scholarships of two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500) each, and ten (10) regional scholarships of one thousand dollars (\$1,000) each. The Honours and Awards Committee will be meeting to award these scholarships from July 12 to 14, 2015.

All scholarships are available to members in good standing of the UTE (or who at the time of their departure from the CRA in the same calendar year were members in good standing of the UTE), their spouses or common-law spouses (including same-sex partners), and their children or grandchildren. However, no more than one scholarship will be awarded to the same family in a given year.

To qualify for these scholarships, you must prepare an essay, an audiovisual submission (painting, drawing, sculpture or photograph) or a video that expresses your views on one of the following topics:

1. Labour's contribution to the community;
2. What you foresee as the role of unions in the future;
3. An event that affected you most in the past year (news, personal, social); or
4. Topics selected by the Honours and Awards Committee, which are as follows:
  - a) UTE is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year and we believe unions are still relevant. How can UTE ensure it will still be relevant for the next 50 years?
  - b) How can the union benefit immigrants and diversity in the community?



Your application must be postmarked no later than June 15.

Just think, you and your children or grandchildren have a chance to earn an incredible hourly wage. That's right! Say you spend four hours on your essay, submission or video, then you could make **\$250.00 to \$625.00 per hour**. This will make it easier for you to achieve your academic goals.

***Education is important because it is the future.***

For full details, please follow this link:

<https://www.ute-sei.org/en/for-members/ute-scholarships>

***Denis Lalancette  
Chair, Honours and Awards Committee***

## GOODBYE, AND THANK YOU

Time marches on, and retirement is calling. It is a difficult decision to make, because it feels like leaving your second family, and the activities that tie you to your reason to advocate must come to an end, just like the daily activities that demand that same activism and make you feel the emotions necessary for the adrenaline that carries you forward to defend those you represent and your beliefs.

And, yes, I will be retiring in July. Oddly enough, I am fine, but I have had to mourn the loss of my union activities. The purpose of retirement is generally to reflect on your years of work and to live at your own pace—most likely to try to slow the relentless pace of time as you age—because the hours seem like seconds versus your life expectancy.

So, I am leaving, and I wish to tell you that I immensely enjoyed the time I spent in the union, even though it comes with its share of conflicts and virtually insurmountable challenges. However, it is under those circumstances that we can surpass our limits and find fulfillment.



It is the members and activists who make a union what it is, and we have the union we have built. You therefore deserve the UTE, which I believe to be a union that stands out as a leader amongst unions. It also stands out in society as the role of the union is to represent its members and in doing so impact society, so that it receives its share of the pie, they are inseparable. For example, weekends and maternity leave, and I would like to think that we played a role in fighting the conservatives in the hope that creating jobs and building the economy would take a more creative route for all of society.

The UTE, in cooperation with the PSAC, also stood out during negotiations by changing the rules and procedures to reflect members' expectations, including enabling you, the members, to participate in bargaining demand process. I am proud to have actively participated in these advancements over more than 33 years, and I cannot leave without telling you that the UTE and PSAC are union organizations that demonstrate empathy and respect for their members.

I am not so presumptuous as to say that things are perfect, but all of the members of your local executive and the national elected representatives are sincere and have rolled up their sleeves to continue striving to deliver the best possible service to members and to protect or achieve a balanced world in society.

To all UTE members, I affirm that I have always represented you with pride and conviction, because I am convinced that you are excellent employees of the CRA as well as full members of your union UTE / PSAC, and you are entitled to respect. I hope that you will continue to foster solidarity, which, according to *Le Petit Larousse*, is a feeling that urges us to help one another. There may be no miracle solution, but it is strength in numbers that must be developed, because the middle class we represent is shrinking, and we must join forces to fight for our future.

Thank you, and continue on, because tomorrow is another day and together we will aspire toward a better world.

**Denis Lalancette**  
**Regional Vice-President Quebec Region**  
**(previous 2<sup>nd</sup> National Vice-President in charge of collective bargaining)**

## YOU AND YOUR COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT

Over the next few editions of the Union News, the Communications Committee will attempt to provide information and insight into various clauses contained in your collective agreement.

Information contained in this article is not meant to replace consulting with your union representative for guidance and advice.

The purpose is to enlighten members on provisions within the collective agreement, that they may be able to access if the member encounter circumstances similar to those contained in these examples. Generally speaking, all permanent employees and term employees paying union dues and working in positions covered by the CRA/PSAC collective agreements have access to all the provisions contained in the collective agreement.

### Vacation leave (Article 34.07)

Your collective agreement provides for the reinstatement of, or extension to, a vacation period in circumstances where the employee during this time would have been;

- granted a period of bereavement leave;
- been entitled to leave under the family related leave provisions to temporarily care for an ill member of their immediate family;
- or was ill during their vacation and produces a medical certificate for a period of sick leave.

It should be noted that any periods of leave with respect to either bereavement or family related leave would be equal to the amount of leave that would be allowable under the provisions contained in the collective agreement.

### Leave with pay for family related responsibilities (Article 43)

Your collective agreement provides leave under various circumstances related to family responsibilities. In any fiscal year (April 1 - March 31) an employee is entitled to a maximum of 45 hours leave.

This collective agreement provision is not discretionary "**the employer shall grant**" and as long as the employee meets the requirements contained therein, it is our belief that the employer cannot deny the request. As with any of the provisions discussed in this article we advise that you check with a member of your local executive. Over the years, this clause through negotiations has expanded to cover additional circumstances. For example, previously the employer was reluctant to grant leave under this clause in situations where a family member was in the hospital, this is now specifically covered. Over time it is hoped that both parties will recognize other circumstances that should be considered and included in this clause.

If you believe something should be included under this article, we would suggest that you consider asking your local to submit a bargaining demand. Demands can be submitted at any time and would be reviewed for inclusion in the next round of bargaining.

The most recent addition to this clause **43.02 (g)** addresses situations whereby due to unforeseen circumstances a member is required to provide temporary care for their child, if for example their daycare is closed unexpectedly or there is a closure of an elementary school. In most cases the employer would usually grant at least a day's leave allowing the member to make alternate arrangements. For clarity, this does not provide for leave when the member was aware in advance of the daycare or school closures.

In all of these cases regarding requests for family related leave where the employer is reluctant to grant your request, managers are unfortunately often too quick to just say no. We also find that regularly many personal questions are asked that appear to have no relevance to the request. If you encounter problems, we strongly encourage you to speak to a local representative.

### **Personal leave (Article 54.02)**

Your collective agreement provides in each fiscal year, two "personal" days. These can be used for almost any reason that the employee wishes to take them. Of note this leave is granted in total hours so an employee working more than 7 1/2 hour days will not receive a full two days of leave under this provision. There are two other considerations to be aware of with this leave. The collective agreement states that 5-day notice is required to request this leave, however many managers forego this requirement if there is no pressing reason to deny such a request. Lastly this leave unlike vacation leave does not carry over to the following year so, if not used the employee will lose it. This is something that employees must be aware of, especially those hired near the end of the fiscal year (March), you must use them before April 1. Generally speaking, most members for this reason tend to use these days before any requests for vacation leave.



In the next newsletter we will write extensively on article 54.01, leave with or without pay for other reasons. This clause is one where our belief is that all too often the employer takes too narrow a view of the purpose and intent of this provision and tends to ignore jurisprudence supporting a broader interpretation of its use. More on that next time.

If there is a provision in the collective agreement that you would like us to comment on, please contact Susan Duncan at [duncans@ute-sei.org](mailto:duncans@ute-sei.org)

**Gary Esslinger**  
*Chair, Communications Committee*

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY NEWS**

Good news! Effective April 1st, 2016, Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC), formerly referred to as Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC), has officially banned the use of Asbestos in the new construction and renovation projects for all buildings it operates.

For the past decade, the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC), along with other groups, has actively campaigned for such a ban in the federally owned buildings. The issues related to the presence of asbestos in the buildings where members of the Union of Taxation Employees are working and to ensure that the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) fulfills its obligations to all employees under the Canada Labour Code, Part II, have been at the heart of our concerns. Ongoing discussions on this topic are continuing both at the local level and at the National Health and Safety Policy Committee (NHSPC). The NHSPC has made this topic a standing agenda item at both the local and national health and safety committee meetings.

*(Continued on page 6)*

(Continued from page 5)

There is no doubt that, for many of your health and safety activists, this represents the best news that we've had in many years.

The ban announced by PSPC is not a complete victory, since many groups, including labour organizations, are calling for a full ban on all asbestos products used in Canada, but it is a very significant first step in the right direction. Your union will continue to lobby to make this a reality.

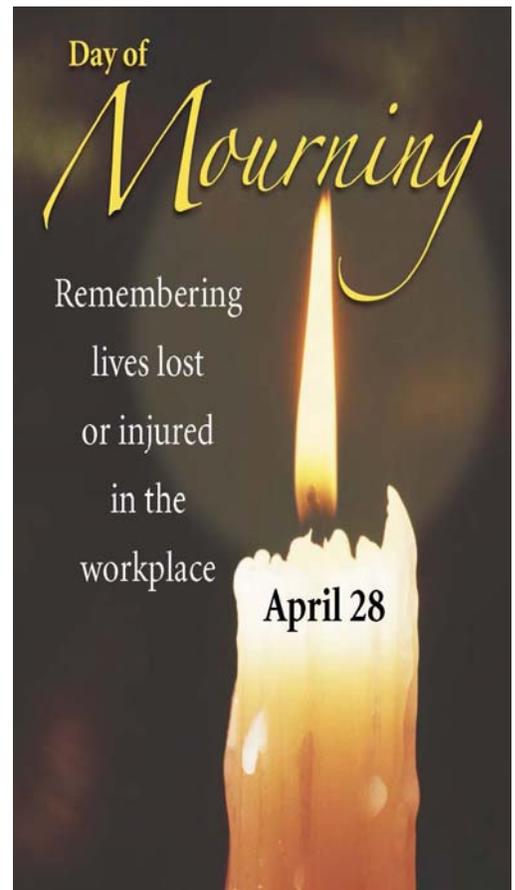
Any concerns related to this issue, please bring to the attention of your local health and safety committee.

**UTE's National Health and Safety Committee**

### COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

The members of the Communications Committee are:

- ⇒ Chair: Gary Esslinger, RVP Prairie Region
- ⇒ Members: Daniel Camara, RVP Montreal Region  
Johann Ackermann, VP Surrey TC  
Susan Duncan, National Office



### SAVE THE DATE



The **UTE National Equal Opportunities Conference** is being held in **Ottawa, October 14, 15 and 16, 2016**. Each Local will be entitled to two (2) delegates fully funded by UTE National and are encouraged to send additional members.

Watch for the **Call Letter which will be issued July 18<sup>th</sup> with a deadline of August 26<sup>th</sup> to apply**. Members who wish to apply must be approved by their local executive.

The Equal Opportunities Committee is looking forward to hosting the National Conference and meeting many members whose passion is Equal Opportunities and all that it stands for.

If you would like to be part of one of the equity groups email listings, you can contact the equity representative. Please access the UTE webpage at [www.ute-sei.org](http://www.ute-sei.org) and select the tab "Committees". There you will find the EO committee and a list of the equity group representatives with an email tab.

**Madonna Gardiner**  
*Chair, Equal Opportunities Committee*

### CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Please note that all address changes should be done via e-mail to Louise Dorion ([dorionl@ute-sei.org](mailto:dorionl@ute-sei.org)) or via the national web site. If you do not have access to an e-mail, please pass it on (with your PSAC ID) to a local representative or mail it directly to the National Office at 233 Gilmour Street, Suite 800, Ottawa ON K2P 0P2.