

# UNW

## Action Update



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### President's Message

#### Message from the President

We were glad to welcome many people to Somba K'e Civic Plaza on Monday to celebrate Labour Day with the theme "We Stand for Fairness." What was remarkable about the experience again was working with labour colleagues at a new location to hand out food to such a large diversity of people who took the time to stand in a long line and share in our most important day of the year.



One of the things that again stood out and that is often noticeable during public barbecues in the North, was the number of our poor and impoverished sisters and brothers who came by simply for a meal. This is relevant because critics often argue that unions promote poverty traps for the lower class by ensuring and inflating income security for a select few, middle class families. When this happens, as the belief goes, there can be a tendency for people who thrive with decent jobs to look inwardly and increasingly turn greedy. This in turn makes it harder for those who are impoverished in our society to get out of the dire situations they find themselves and their families.

At the UNW, our outlook is very different. Our historic and current battles with employers for fair wages and non-monetary support like mental health protection have been to promote more just workplaces. With financial and employment stability, workers can then participate in the broader economy through consumer spending or have the time to support others in need through activities outside the workplace. Indeed, building common fronts with other like-minded social justice groups is one of our main priorities looking into the future.

We are asking this season as the cold months approach and as the NWT legislative assembly returns for members to keep in mind those less fortunate than ourselves. One of the ways we propose to do this is by supporting United Way NWT which is an organization that directs charitable donations to groups that help the poor the most. Last year the group approved \$155,000 worth of grants to 21 organizations across the Northwest Territories. Such groups have included Food Rescue, Yellowknife Association of Community Living and the Foster Family Coalition of the NWT.

Please watch for donor pledge forms or contribute funding through your employer over the next several weeks.

### UNW News

#### Labour Day - 'We Stand for Fairness'

September 8, 2016

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**"The Mission of the Union of Northern Workers is to inspire, engage and empower workers and community through quality education, effective representation, model public service and political action."**

**UNW Members  
Discounts**

**Mark's Work  
Warehouse**  
Clothes That Work.



The Union of Northern Workers, with the Public Service Alliance of Canada and Northern Territories Federation of Labour, welcomed many Northerners to Labour Day events throughout the Northwest Territories, Sept. 5. Please [click the link](#) to see some of the exciting photographs from Monday's barbecue.

### **Bargaining Highlights**

Members are asked to keep in mind some of the following dates as we continue to fight for new and fair collective agreements with northern employers. Please refer to the website for continued updates.

The Union of Northern Workers and Northwest Territories Power Corporation are currently in collective agreement negotiations from Aug. 29 to Sept. 1. As well, the UNW and the GNWT are scheduled to resume collective agreement negotiations from Sept. 26 to 29.

As for the Dominion Diamond Corporation, the UNW is working with the employer to find mutually available dates to continue collective agreement negotiations.

Please stay tuned to the Bargaining Updates section of the website for regular updates on bargaining with the [GNWT](#), [Dominion Diamond Corporation](#), and [Northwest Territories Power Corporation](#).

### **Open house for UNW headquarters planned for October**



Mark your calendars! The grand opening for our new building is scheduled for Oct. 28 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m..

Keep an eye on the website for details!

## Meet Your Political Action Committee



The UNW wishes to once again introduce one of its most important committees - the Political Action Committee. From left are Chris Potyok, regional vice-president, North Great Slave, Rashi Patel, equity vice-president (chair), centre, and Valerie Robertson, regional vice-president of Beaufort Delta-Sahtu, right.

As per UNW regulations, the political action committee is responsible for promoting awareness and involvement of UNW members in political action and campaigns. Each local receives political action funding for the purposes of engaging in educational, political, economic and other activities to advance and protect the economic and social conditions of the UNW, its members and other working people.

This year the GNWT is painting a picture of "doom and gloom" and we need to stand together to ensure that leaders are making the best choices for the people of NWT.

Some ideas on how you can engage your members include building partnerships with like-minded coalitions and labour organizations in your region, holding an educational campaign, organizing an event to engage with your MP, MLA, or municipal leaders, sharing promotional materials with members.

## PSAC News

### NTCL

On August 19th, 2016, the Northern Transportation Company Ltd (NTCL) appeared before a court in Alberta under the Companies' Creditors Arrangements Act (CCAA). The company filed a motion to suspend its future "solvency deficiency" payments owed under the pension plan. PSAC/UCTE continues to support efforts to protect the jobs and pension benefit entitlements of NTCL employees and pensioners. Please read the full press release [here](#).

### Support for Canada Post Workers

The UNW and PSAC support Canadian Postal Union workers as they seek to work out their labour dispute with Canada Post. Please see the latest from Robyn Benson, National President regarding what to do in the event of labour action [here](#).

### Fix Phoenix Pay System

After months of stalling, Minister Judy Foote finally met with National President

Robyn Benson on August 19 to discuss the on-going problems with the Phoenix pay system. At the meeting, Benson told the Minister to commit to providing the necessary resources to fix the Phoenix, and apologize to the affected workers. Please see the full press release [here](#).

## Training and Events

### Yellowknife Living Together Symposium

The Canadian Race Relations Foundation will be hosting a Yellowknife Living Together Symposium at the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre, Sept. 14 from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The event will include partnering organizations like the City of Yellowknife and the NWT Human Rights Commission. The day promises to feature discussions on multiculturalism in Canadian cities. Please visit [the website](#) to learn more or to register.

### Fall Training Calendar

Union members are asked to take note of the following educational training dates this fall. To register, or for more information, please contact Kadee St. Croix, service administration assistant at [stcroix@unw.ca](mailto:stcroix@unw.ca) or the service officer providing the training. Please keep an eye on the [Training Calendar](#) section of the website for full descriptions of the courses and updates to our exciting opportunities!!!!

### Shop Steward Conference

The Union of Northern Workers will be hosting the 2016 Shop Steward Network Training/Conference in Yellowknife from Nov. 5 to 6 at the UNW training room, located on the first floor of our office building at 4910 53rd Street, Yellowknife. Please see [the website](#) for further details.

### Upcoming Equity Meeting

All equity groups are invited to an upcoming meeting at the UNW HQ training rooms on Sep 27. The event will be located on the first floor and will take place at 6 p.m. The meeting can also be accessed by calling 1-866-413-7177 and Participant's Code: 475768. For more information, please contact Rashmi Patel, equity vice-president at [patelr@unw.ca](mailto:patelr@unw.ca).

### Annual General Meeting Season!

Gayla Thunstrom, First Vice-President of the Union of Northern workers recently issued a letter to all Local Presidents to begin preparing for local annual general meetings. Please read the letter thoroughly by clicking [here](#).

### Mentorship Program

Local officers are encouraged to take advantage of the Mentorship Program. The program involves advanced training to allow Locals to function at a higher level. A brochure for this opportunity can be downloaded from our website [here](#). Please contact Gayla Thunstrom for further information at [thunstg@unw.ca](mailto:thunstg@unw.ca)

### Notice to Local Presidents

We are doing a massive update on our communications plan. We are hoping to get the most up-to-date contact information for our Fax Facts and Newsletter emails. Please try to provide the most current work fax numbers and home emails so we can maintain contact! Further questions can be forwarded to Simon Whitehouse at [whitehs@unw.ca](mailto:whitehs@unw.ca).

### Relief Employees

The Union is currently investigating grievances that affect Relief employees. If you are a Relief employee and one of the below categories fits your circumstances please contact the UNW at [thistla@unw.ca](mailto:thistla@unw.ca).

- 1)"Term Relief" - if you are a relief employee and your employer has given you a contract with an end date (not on a Term contract)
- 2) If you are in a Relief position where services do not operate on a daily basis (7 days per week)
- 3) If you hold two Relief positions (or an Indeterminate and Relief position) in the same facility
- 4) If you are a Relief employee "on the schedule" for more than 21 consecutive days/shifts without signing a Term contract
- 5) If you are working more than 150-160 hours per month (1950 or 2080 hours) and not receiving OT
- 6) If you are on a Term and have not received or signed a contract
- 7) If you have worked the required yearly hours and not received a pay increment

Please ensure you forward any documentation to support the issue such as, but not limited to; schedules, pay stubs, job offers & contracts.

## Contact Us

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