



## **Josie Gould Memorial Scholarship**

Sister Josie Gould was one of the original members of the Union of Northern Workers. Her untiring efforts had profound effects on union members who knew her over those years.

Josie was born in Smokey Lake, Alberta and was one of 15 children. Afflicted with Tuberculosis, she spent the first 13 years of her life in the Aberhart TB Sanitorium where she gained the strength and internal fortitude to overcome the many challenges presented to her.

Josie moved to Yellowknife in 1964 where she worked for the Stanton Hospital, the Northern Canada Power Commission, Pre-Cambrian Mining, and finally the Government of the Northwest Territories. Josie remained with the government in various departments over the next 34 years. Starting in 1970, she began her involvement with the UNW and in 1987 became a member of the Union's Executive, a position she held until her retirement.

Josie Gould passed away the week prior to the Labour Day long weekend in 2008, which also happened to be the eve of the UNW's 40th anniversary.

Sister Josie was one of the earliest supporters of the UNW, almost from its beginning. She was an active member of the union in those early days when the

employer, the Government of the Northwest Territories, was not required to deduct or remit members' dues to the union. On payday in those days, individual union officers went around from workplace to workplace, and from desk to desk collecting union dues in cash. Josie Gould was one of those collection officers, and she knew how to do the job well!



While Sister Josie was a person of short stature, she was big in many other ways. She had a big heart, and she was big in spirit and determination. She would show up at a member's desk on pay day and demand "*Your Union Dues Brother!*" And she would stand there staring him right in the eye, waiting until he paid up. Sister Josie never was one to take NO for an answer.

Josie Gould became involved with the UNW partly because she was always a champion of the underdog, or of anyone who needed her assistance. That was her nature. Her personal life reflected this through her work with Special Olympics, Youth Bowling, the Baker Centre, the Ladies of the Royal Purple, the Legion Ladies Auxiliary, and Victim Services.

The other part of why Sister Josie became involved with her Union was because on one occasion, "management" tried to take advantage of her. Sister Josie went to battle, and with her union's help, fought for her rights and won.

This was at a time when very few women stood up to their bosses. Josie, proud and empowered by her victory, took the bit in her teeth and went on to fight for others who either couldn't or were just too afraid to stand up for their rights.

Sister Josie battled injustice, discrimination and harassment wherever she found it, and she taught and encouraged her fellow union brothers and sisters to do the same.

Sister Josie Gould was not only a union activist but a leader as well. She served as her Local's Treasurer, Local Secretary, Local Vice President and President. She was repeatedly elected as Regional Vice President for the UNW's Sombe K'e Region. This was a major responsibility because that region, has always been the Union's largest region. As a Regional Vice President, Sister Gould sat on the Union's core Executive and had direct influence in directing the Union of Northern Workers. Sister Josie also played a significant role in many contract

negotiations with the Government of the Northwest Territories, the Power Corporation and many other employers.



Because of her staunch commitment to the UNW, and because of her devotion to helping youth, the Josie Gould Scholarship was created upon her retirement.

After her death in August 2008, the Scholarship was renamed the "Josie Gould Memorial Scholarship." Today, in her name, financial assistance for post secondary education is awarded yearly to 10 students who understand the importance of the labour movement.