



OUR WORK MATTERS!

OCCUPATIONAL & WAGE POLICY CONFERENCES 2009

April 30, 2009

Dear HEU member,

RE: FACILITIES SUBSECTOR OCCUPATIONAL CONFERENCES OUR WORK MATTERS! 2009

With a new round of contract negotiations coming up soon – the current collective agreement expires on March 31, 2010 – HEU's bargaining preparations are underway with Occupational and Wage Policy Conferences scheduled this fall.

HEU members have made it clear, particularly during our 2005 Occupational Conferences and 2006 and 2008 conventions, that they need to be more involved in the bargaining process. And the union wants to make sure your voice is heard.

That's why we've scheduled five Occupational Conferences for workers in the clerical, patient care, patient care technical, support, and trades and maintenance occupational groups to engage our members **from all job families** in bargaining, promote the diversity within our membership, and have a clear focus on achievable goals when prioritizing bargaining demands.

Once again under the theme **OUR WORK MATTERS!**, these two-day conferences are an excellent opportunity for HEU members to:

- network with peers from around the province;
- profile their work;
- discuss issues specific to their occupational area;
- identify a short list of bargaining priorities that address those issues;
- talk about the impact of the current political and economic climate on bargaining, and how to bargain strategically in this environment, and
- promote occupational issues both within and outside the union.

In the coming weeks, your local will hold "Special Meetings" to bring together members from each of the five job categories to discuss issues, determine bargaining priorities, and elect/select conference participant(s) from each occupational area. We encourage you to attend the meeting for your occupational group, even if you haven't participated in union meetings before. Your on-the-job experience and willingness to share your views with colleagues are all you need.

Watch for notices posted on your local union bulletin board, or check with your local executive for more information.

Occupational Conference participants will have their conference expenses (i.e. child care, lost wages, travel, accommodation) covered by the union. Please note that participant credentials must be received by the Provincial Office on **July 10, 2009 at 5:00 p.m.**

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CHANGES SINCE LAST ROUND OF BARGAINING

There are two ways bargaining demands can be submitted to November's Wage Policy Conference. Your local can write and submit bargaining demands. And also, the union's Provincial Executive has committed to submitting priority demands – passed at each of the Occupational Conferences – directly to the Wage Policy Conference. Delegates to Wage Policy, who will be elected at local "General Membership Meetings" in June, will then debate and vote on bargaining demands – focusing on issues most critical to HEU members – to equip the union's bargaining committee with a strong mandate in contract negotiations.

HEU made several gains during 2006 bargaining, including policy tables for nursing issues, a \$5 million education fund, a cap on layoffs, and special wage adjustments for targeted classifications. Then, in June 2007, the union won its long, *Bill 29* legal challenge when the Supreme Court of Canada ruled sections of the law unconstitutional and, most importantly, that bargaining is a protected right under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. This was not only a victory for HEU members, but also for workers all across the country as the right to bargain on provisions like contracting out and job security was restored.

So, we're approaching contract talks with the right to bargain on job security issues. And the economic climate will play a role in the bargaining outcome. That's why it's important to have a clear focus on achievable demands at the bargaining table.

In solidarity,



KEN ROBINSON
President



JUDY DARCY
Secretary-Business Manager



DONISA BERNARDO
Financial Secretary

CONFERENCES AND DATES

SUPPORT:

September 9 & 10

TRADES & MAINTENANCE:

September 15 & 16

CLERICAL:

September 17 & 18

PATIENT CARE TECHNICAL:

September 22 & 23

PATIENT CARE:

September 24 & 25

cc: Provincial Executive, Reps & Directors, Local chairpersons

P.S. If you receive this letter before the provincial election on May 12, we encourage you to vote. HEU members and their families can make a huge impact on results in key ridings across B.C. The stakes are high, and the union supports candidates who advocate for public health care, improvements to seniors' care and community social services, and decent, family-supporting wages for all B.C. workers.