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## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



While bargaining at the University of Manitoba has dominated much of this President's & AESES' time since our last newsletter, quite a bit has been happening otherwise.

At UM, budget cuts continue to affect our members negatively with approximately 35 positions lost. In addition, financial strain has been added by the approximate 34% increase in the parking rate set to hit those non-UMFA employees who travel to and from UM by personal vehicle. The cost of parking for all University staff has always been negotiated between the employer and UMFA. This year, for the first time, the employer has chosen to separate the users and apply a differential rate. AESES is most certainly aware of the effect this will have on our UM members and we are committed to communicating our displeasure with the employer with an attempt to bring this item into the bargaining discussion.

All of the above will be folded into discussions of the UM's Stop the Cuts Coalition. While the coalition has met only intermittently over the summer, one should NOT assume that they are no longer operational; the opposite is true. Some groups have been active and are formulating activities for September. Watch for more information as events ramp up...and GET INVOLVED. If you are disappointed in the University's spending priorities, join in the activities and let your voice be heard.

Over the past 8 months or so, AESES has been meeting with HR and IST at UM to discuss the exclusion of several new positions. After consultation and review, AESES has agreed to exclude one position. At this point the University has not moved forward with excluding any of the remaining positions. If the University decides to post and fill any of these positions, AESES would retain the right to file with Manitoba Labour Board to determine if the positions would become part of the bargaining unit or properly excluded under the act. Stay tuned as this concern unfolds.

Issues continue to percolate at The University of Winnipeg as well. Bargaining with that employer has begun. The Flex Benefits Plan continues to be discussed by the stakeholders.

And, budgetary restraints dominate everyone's thoughts. In a recent Winnipeg Free Press article (Nick Martin, June 24, 2015), President Trimbee stated that UW "achieved a balanced budget primarily through vacancy management." She further stated that "the university hopes most job vacancies will be support staff." What exactly does this mean? Does it mean job cuts? Or, no replacements for people who retire, resign or get sick? It is hard to know, but it definitely seems that AESES members will be expected to do more (again!) with less (again!). AESES will continue to monitor and address these anticipated workload issues and potential job losses as we hear about them. If you become aware of something out of the ordinary happening in your area or another, please let us know. We cannot help if we are unaware of the issue.

Even though these issues persist at both universities, I hope everyone had a chance to take a little bit of time off to recharge their batteries. September brings with it the hustle and bustle of a new term with many new faces in the hallways and our members will need to be ready to do what we do best...support the educational activities of our university. Good luck to you all.

- Laurie Morris

## IN THIS ISSUE

From the President's Desk.....	1
The Pros and Pros of Unions .....	2
AESES Appointments .....	2
Can You Tell Me?.....	3
Bargaining Update.....	3
Seek and Find Scavenger Hunt.....	4
Value of DB Pension Plans? .....	4
In Memoriam .....	5
Contract Administration.....	5
Accolades and Congratulations.....	5
New Faces at UM/UW.....	6
Seminars That Educate .....	6

# THE PROS AND PROS OF UNIONS

“And so, my fellow AESES members, ask not what your union can do for you; ask what you can do for your union.”

But first, let us tell you what your union can do for you.

AESES is a group of workers who joined together to form a union, which allows them to collectively talk to the university employers about wages, working conditions and benefits. Instead of individual employees attempting to negotiate on their own, AESES has successfully improved standards for our members since first being formed in 1972.

Unions make a difference both at work and in the quality of life for its members. Union representation ensures that a right to fair and equal treatment is enforced. Jobs and workplaces are made safer, members are paid better and are likelier to have benefits that help them achieve a work-life balance.

Imagine a life of working six days per week, potentially 50 hours or more, earning sub-standard wages, without access to benefits like medical coverage, paid vacations, the option of overtime pay, or many other perks we now benefit from and take for granted. Before the origination of unions, employees had no rights and were at the mercy of their employers. Countless people were killed or permanently injured on the job and many more people put up with inhumane working conditions just to eke out a meager existence. Not ideal.

Today, full-time unionized workers earn almost 20% more than their non-union counterparts. These figures are exclusive of benefits, so they would likely be even higher if dental, medical and pension plans were factored in. A Canadian Labour Congress study shows that on average, unionized workers across Manitoba earn \$6.10/hour more than non-union workers, and that women with unions earn more and get paid more fairly when they work under the protection of a collective agreement.

But these advantages don't only belong to union members; they benefit everyone. When unions stand up for fairness,

they raise the bar for all employees, whether unionized or not. Many of the things first won by unions are enjoyed by all workers today – minimum wages, overtime pay, workplace safety standards, maternity and parental leave, vacation pay, and protection from discrimination and harassment.

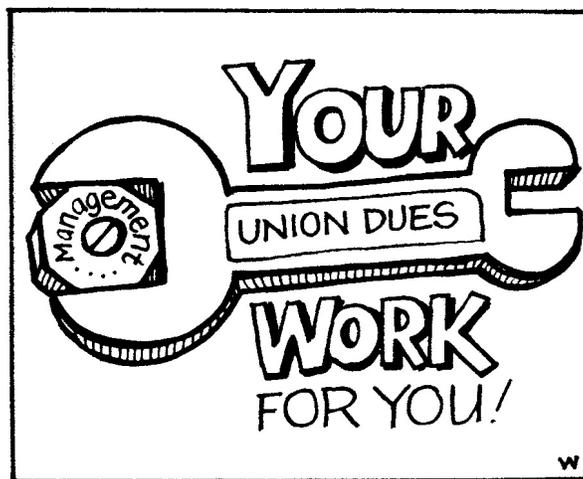
A union is not only valuable in terms of gaining ground and furthering benefits, but also in maintaining benefits and protections that already exist within the collective agreement. If the universities could, they would gladly scale back some perks that union members are accustomed to, to make their bottom line more profitable, especially in these tough economic times.

Workers in unions are an important part of the local community and economy because that's where they spend their paycheques. Their incomes and benefits support local businesses and bolster the local tax base, which in turn supports public works and community services that add to everyone's quality of life.

Union dues are sometimes a sticking point for members. Our current rate is 0.75% of a member's wages, which is deducted from each paycheque.

This is equal in value to approximately 6 hours worked per year. Which seems like a negligible trade-off, when you consider that without union representation, wages would likely fall by several dollars per hour, which when spaced out over a full year, becomes much more noticeable than the six hours mentioned. This is especially important to consider in the midst of bargaining at both universities. Without a union standing up for member rights and demanding salary increases, the dues would indeed seem redundant.

The scene before unions came about was grim. Though things might not seem ideal now, we certainly don't want the benefits of union membership to disappear, lest we revert back to the conditions of old.



## AESES APPOINTMENTS

Jean Lyon has been appointed as Chair of the Electoral & Districting Committee.

# CAN YOU TELL ME?

The discipline process at both campuses consists of four formal steps. They must be successively followed as outlined in Article 9 of each Collective Agreement, in order for discipline to take place (except for just cause). The discipline process steps include:

1. Oral Warning - the University is required to notify the employee in advance that an Oral Warning will be taking place. This meeting is intended to clarify the issue of concern and outline any remedial steps for resolving it. The University will then summarize the meeting in writing. This will be placed in the employee's personnel file for six months. A difference to note is that at UW union representation is permitted during an Oral Warning meeting, whereas at UM it is not.

2. Letter of Warning - if the previous issue is not resolved, or another issue presents itself while an Oral Warning is in effect, then a formal Letter of Warning shall be issued. Again, the University is required to notify the employee in advance that a meeting to discuss the disciplinary action will take place. Union representation is permitted. The



letter will be placed in the employee's personnel file for six months.

3. Suspension - if the previous issue is not resolved or another issue presents itself while a Letter of Warning is in effect, then an employee may be suspended without pay for up to three days. The Suspension will be confirmed in writing, which will be placed in the employee's personnel file for a period of 24 months at UW and indefinitely at UM.

4. Dismissal - if the issues dealt with in the previous steps are not resolved, or if another issue presents itself following a Suspension, then an employee may be dismissed within 24 months of the Suspension. The dismissal will be confirmed in writing. An Employee

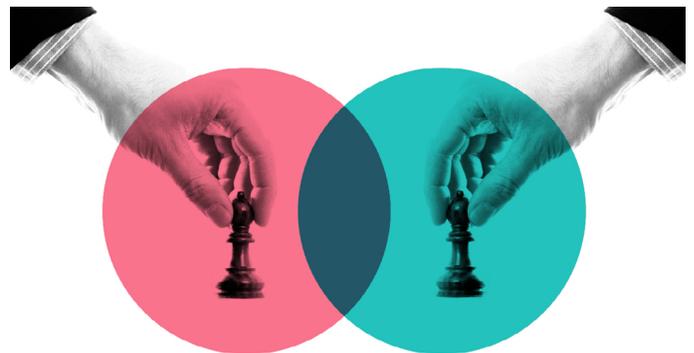
who is suspended or dismissed shall not require advance notice of this action.

If the employee feels any disciplinary proceeding is unjust, he/she should contact the AESES office at their earliest opportunity to begin the grievance process. This needs to be done within 20 days of the event being grieved, as a deadline exists for a grievance to be filed.

# BARGAINING UPDATE

The bargaining teams from AESES and UM have continued to meet on a weekly basis through June and July. Using the Interest-Based Negotiation method, both sides have worked their way through the issues, finding acceptable solutions where possible. Discussions have taken place around the issues of flextime and overtime; sick leave; classifications; banked time; standby pay; and maternity/parental leave, among others. Consensus on monetary items is outstanding.

At UW, all signed AESES members were invited to attend a general membership meeting on June 19, whereat the AESES bargaining team presented its proposals that they would be discussing during the upcoming bargaining process. Both sides met for the first time on July 14, to prepare opening statements, exchange proposals and discuss the logistics of future meetings. As summer break is upon us, bargaining is temporarily on hold until the fall.



Continue to stay tuned to [www.aeses.ca](http://www.aeses.ca) and social media for updates.

# SEEK AND FIND SCAVENGER HUNT

Do you like winning prizes? How about solving riddles? Surfing the web? Of course.

Search the AESES website ([www.aeses.ca](http://www.aeses.ca)) to learn more about your union.

As of October 1, 2015, we will be running an online scavenger hunt. 13 questions, all of whose answers can be found by perusing our website, all pages and facets of it. One month to seek, find and submit your results for a chance to win.

Three contest winners will be randomly drawn from among those entrants who answer and submit all questions correctly. Prizes are one of three top-brand tablets for each of the winners.

The contest will only be open to current AESES members.

Check your inbox for contest information next month!



## VALUE OF DB PENSION PLANS?

There has been much talk about DB (Defined Benefit) Pension Plans and if they still make sense for companies.

“An increasing number of Canadian public sector employees have been closing their DB plans. This trend is hardly a surprise for DB critics, who say DB’s days are numbered because these plans are too expensive to offer. But DB supporters counter DB plans can be efficient and positively affect the economy...”



There’s [also] evidence DB pensions are good for the government and the Canadian economy. A 2013 study by Boston Consulting Group shows only 10% to 15% of DB retirees in Canada receive the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS), a benefit provided to low-income seniors. Among other Canadian retirees, this number jumps to more than 45%. DB pensions reduce annual GIS payouts by between \$2 billion and \$3 billion, the report reveals.

The report also says DB pensioners contribute \$14 billion to \$16 billion annually to Canadian government coffers through income, sales and property taxes. These retirees spend \$56 billion annually on various goods.

And DB plans have lots of capital. Per the 2014 *Shifting Public Sector DB plans to DC* study, total Canadian pension assets amounted to \$1.34 trillion at the end of 2013, with more than \$900 billion in public schemes. This lets DB plans finance big projects, such as real estate and infrastructure, over the long run.

‘Many federal and provincial finance ministers have called for more investments in our infrastructure. Pension plans have stepped up,’ Dobson says, explaining infrastructure, with its steady cash flows, fits DB plans well.”

Reproduced from *2015 Top 100 Pension Funds Report: Still Got Some Spark*, Benefits Canada, June 2015.

## IN MEMORIAM

AESES is saddened to report that Honourary Life Member – Past President **Paul Lindsay** passed away on July 11, 2015. Paul was an integral member to the formation of AESES, beginning in the summer of 1972, and served on the very first Negotiation Committee and Bargaining Team that negotiated the first Collective Agreement between the Association and the University of Manitoba. Paul continued his extensive service to AESES as the first Executive Vice-President and our second President, serving in the latter role from 1974-1975. Paul continued to serve the AESES membership following his term as President as the AESES

Coordinator on the UM Staff Benefits Committee. In this role, he played an instrumental part in the successful reduction of the penalties for early retirement and the increase in the formula pension during the late 1970s. This was followed by steering the proposals for establishing cost of living adjustments for employees on Long Term Disability through the Staff Benefits Committee in the early 1980s. Both of these accomplishments have had a major impact on all members of the University community. Paul's service and dedication to AESES epitomized the qualities of true volunteerism and concern for one's fellow employee.

## CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION

Following Arbitration, a member had their dismissal upheld. The member had used their work phone and email for personal matters, which resulted in the member's cellphone and email account being investigated. In addition, the member refused a direct request from their supervisor for returning the University provided cellphone by resetting (erasing) the phone prior to returning it.

What is important in this decision is that when using University supplied equipment or systems, there is no

guarantee that your personal information will remain outside of the view of the employer. Our advice to members is to keep all personal communication outside of the normal University property and systems (email/cellphones/tablets or computers), if you wish for it to remain private. Although the employer does not normally explore employee communication as a practice, there are circumstances where the employer may be entitled to conduct an audit of all or part of the systems.

## ACCOLADES AND CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to a number of our AESES members who were recently recognized!

At UM the 9th annual Awards of Excellence celebrated the outstanding work done by members of the university support staff team. Four award categories were presented at a reception in June at the home of the University's President: President's, Leadership, Service and Team. Individual awards consist of a certificate of recognition and a financial award.

Congratulations to:

- Catherine Dunlop on winning the President's Award.
- Mary Kuzmeniuk and Pat Milne on winning Leadership Awards.
- Gitan Armour, Anita Bhinder, Miriam Chavez, Naomi Fujiwara, Breanne Guiboche, Rebecca Irving, Meredith Johnson, Robyn Tully (from the International Centre

for Students); Louise Graham, Trish Graham, Jill Wharton (from the Faculty of Education Graduation and Professional Programs); Jennifer Low-McEleney, Kevin McEleney, Mike Pratt (from the Manitoba Institute for Materials) on winning Team Awards.



## NEW FACES @ UM \*

Haider Abbas	Biosystems Engineering	Steven Shurvell	Security Services
Alixandra Albiets	Central Animal Care Services	Iman Soliman	Mathematics
Ainslie Armstrong	College of Medicine	Alex Sopilnyak	Physical Plant
Forrest Bjornson	Biological Sciences	Mary Tataryn	International Office
Jillayne Bohlen	Enrolment Services	Jena Teopaco	Kinesiology & Rec Management
Kaitlyn Bonhomme	Emergency Medicine	Jonathan Ventura	Environment & Geography
Brendan Brooks	Soil Science	Ying Wang	Pharmacology & Therapeutics
Michaela Choi	Biological Sciences	Wen Xu	Fac. of Envir., Earth, and Resources
Ashley Davidson	Donor Relations	Winston Yeung	Archives & Special Collections
Alexander Edye-Mazowita	Kinesiology & Rec Management		
Lauren Finkel	Neil J. Maclean Health Sciences Library		
Thomas Fogg	Donor Relations		
Ross Furgeson	Security Services		
Kaitlynn Gosselein	Faculty of Social Work		
Vanessa Grandmaison	Fac. of Envir., Earth, and Resources		
Daniel Herpai	Community Health Sciences		
Christopher Higgs	Animal Science		
Mary Horodyski	Human Ecology		
Ryan Huston	I.S.T. Computer & Network Services		
Sarita Jha	Community Health Sciences		
Jeffery Keddy	I.S.T. Computer & Network Services		
Leighton Klos	Kinesiology & Rec Management		
Ehsan Koohpayehzadeh Esfahani	Medical Microbiology		
Adela Kovacevic	Security Services		
Tyson Le	Pharmacology & Therapeutics		
Kwok Li	Plant Science		
Stephanie Mahmood	University Health Services		
Jon Makar	Biological Sciences		
Matthew Markowski	Security Services		
Kevin Mcevoy	Caretaking Services		
Maryam Mirzaie	Biosystems Engineering		
Michael Mogatas	Purchasing Services		
Craig Muller	Security Services		
Deidre Perron	Security Services		
Rizza Reyes	Microbiology		
Elizabeth Richard	Community Health Sciences		
Alia Richter	Central Animal Care Services		
Amelie Roberto-Charron	Biological Sciences		
Barbara Romanik	UM Press		
Jesse Scanlon	Plant Science		
Natalie Scofield-Singh	College of Medicine		
Brandi Shabaga	Geological Sciences		
Amanda Shave	Biological Sciences		

## NEW FACES @ UW \*

Ayobode Akashoro	Campus Living
Genelove Balili	English Language Program
Chantel Banman	Library
Khaeler Bautista	Theatre and Film
Rodrigo Beilfuss	History
Rebekah Bowe	Psychology
Xiao Ding	English Language Program
Jack Dunlop	Education
Holly Enns	Urban & Inner City Studies
Anna Golbrayh Belletsky	Technology Solutions Centre
Samer Habib	Campus Living
Rachel Hammerback	Campus Sustainability
Naomi Happychuk	Arctic Gateway Initiative
Vinay Iyer	VP Academic and Graduate Studies
Phoebe Kagaoan	Student Services- Student Central
Ndeye Kane	English Language Program
Kerri Kuzbyt	Athletics
Kaleigh Norquay	Biology
Ebony Novakowski	Library
Teresa Pereira De Oliveira	Campus Living
Calvin Pun	Student Services – Student Central
Angeline Rivard	Global College & Dialogue Centre
Arden Seeley	Academic Advising
Valerine Stevens	Financial Services
Xiaoyu Yu	English Language Program
Samuel Yusim	Mathematics & Statistics

\* this list includes full-time, part-time, temporary and sessional AESES employees.

## SEMINARS THAT EDUCATE

Thank you to all those who participated in our batch of spring seminars! They were well attended and well lauded.

The AESES Education Committee is finalizing the dates and topics for the fall's learning opportunities. The agenda tentatively features sessions on pottery, a guided tour of the Canadian Museum of Human Rights, scotch whiskey tasting, line dancing and an art gallery visit.

All sessions will be open on a first come, first served basis, with registrations processed through the AESES Office.

Stay tuned for details via our website and your inbox!

