

THE ADVOCATE

Prince Edward Island Union of Public Sector Employees

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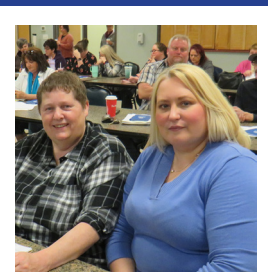
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Dear Members,

Welcome to the Spring edition of *The Advocate*. I had the opportunity to participate in a strategic planning session on April 10, 2024, with the Board of Directors and UPSE staff to work on developing the strategic plan for UPSE. I am pleased to announce that UPSE has completed



Karen Jackson
President, UPSE

work on its strategic plan for the next four years (2024-2028). This has been a goal I set from the onset of my Presidential mandate with UPSE. I look forward to sharing the plan with you upon its review at our next board meeting – stay tuned! The plan outlines the overall strategic direction for the Union including our Vision, Mission, Core Values and Priorities/Goals for the organization. Furthermore, the plan will help us develop detailed action and operational plans for the organization and provide measurement indicators and accountability for the Union's performance and results. I am also encouraged by the level of engagement from our members over the past few months. We have seen a renewed interest in our educational sessions and have had great attendance. There are record numbers of members participating in *Welcome to UPSE* and our *Steward* courses, including a wait list for additional sessions. We've also received numerous inquiries from members about bargaining updates for many of our bargaining units.

On the labour relations front, we continue to advocate for our members' rights and ensure that employers adhere to the collective agreements and relevant legislation. The four PEI Health unions stood in solidarity in March as we issued a press release and correspondence to address Health PEI's ongoing failure to consult, numerous collective agreement violations, and a general level of disrespect shown towards

our union and the membership. I met with the new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Health PEI to discuss these important concerns and while optimistic, will be watching closely to see if the employer is serious about improving labour relations.

On April 4 & 5, 2024, UPSE and Health PEI went before arbitrator Frank Demont to address the issue of worksite versus work unit as this has been an ongoing issue reported by our members. The employer has been inappropriately reassigning members to different work units to compensate for staffing shortages. The Order from Arbitrator Demont did not deliver what the union was seeking, however, it does alter the Employer's management rights. For example, it stipulates that the Employer can reassign staff but only to a maximum of up to five (5) days and reassignment must happen equitably. Specifically, if you are reassigned, then the Employer cannot reassign you again until everyone else has been reassigned in your work unit.

UPSE continues to advocate for the rights of our membership by strengthening our collective agreement language. We have successfully negotiated new contracts for Whisperwood Villa, Community Inclusions, and Tremploy. We have reached a tentative agreement with Community Connections, and are bargaining new contracts for Garden Home, Health PEI, Holland College Faculty, the Atlantic Tourism and Hospitality Institute, Holland College Administrative and Support, and Morell and Early Learning Centre. For more details see our Bargaining update on page 8.

I am appreciative of the members' participation and engagement with our recent surveys for Young Workers and our Harassment, Bullying and Violence survey. The information is critical in assisting the union to formulate a strategy for these two important areas. UPSE will provide the survey results and a report for the membership to review. In regard to the latter of the two surveys, I was distressed to read about some of the incidents that have occurred in your work lives, and I am committed to improving working conditions for the membership. So, I thank you for your honesty

and courage in sharing your experiences.

UPSE has advocated for years for incentives to address recruitment and retention issues and to assist in addressing the staff shortage across Health PEI. Although many of these initiatives did not arise out of consultation with the Union, we are working with Health PEI on a more collaborative model to formulate a new Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for these programs. We are excited to announce the following MOA with incentives that the parties have established and are currently working on:

- 1) Allied Health Professionals (Social Workers, Pharmacists, Dental Hygienists)
- 2) International Educated Nurses (IENs)
- 3) Midwives
- 4) Psychologists
- 5) Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs)
- 6) Critical Shift Premium
- 7) Full Time Equivalent (FTE) increase for RCWs
- 8) Working Extra Evenings, Nights, Weekends and Holidays
- 9) Sherwood Medical Home

We are advocating for retention incentives for our members as well. We want the Employer to incentivize, recognize and appreciate the valuable contributions of loyal staff. Failure to do so will only contribute to a deterioration of morale and culture, and will incentivize members to move to work areas and/or Employers who appreciate and recognize their value.

I would like to inform you that UPSE has secured *Labour Market Adjustments* (LMAs) within the Civil Service for many of the trades workers. The union recognizes there are still many areas that need to be recognized and is advocating and working with the province to secure these required LMAs as well.

Finally, I want to take a moment to welcome our newest members. With the realignment and introduction of new services, UPSE is pleased to welcome our new members under the Pharmacare program, Sherwood Medical Home, and our new Midwives. We look forward to working with you. I am excited about the positive changes on the way for UPSE, as we move forward to best serve our members, and the labour movement in Prince Edward Island.

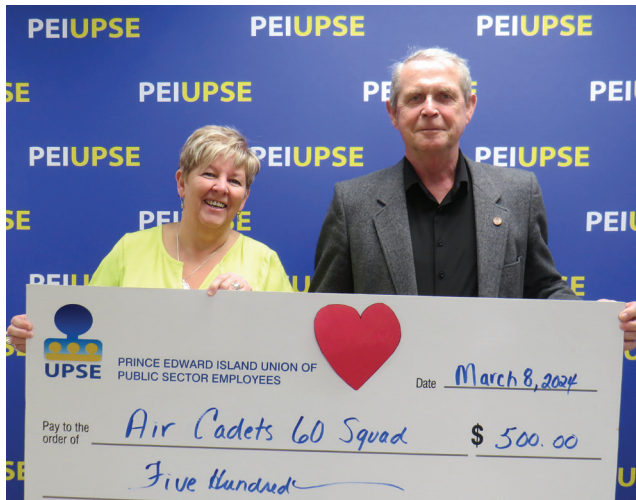
UPSE President, Karen Jackson

UPSE Has a Heart

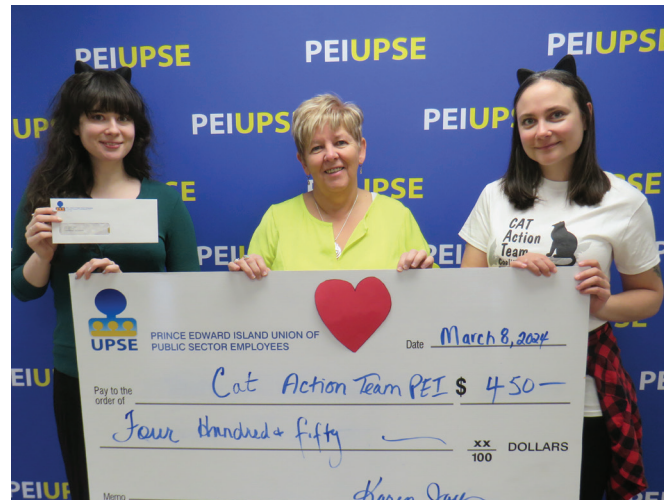
The PEI Union of Public Sector Employees, on behalf of the membership, has recently donated \$15,000 to non-profit community organizations across Prince Edward Island through the UPSE Has a Heart campaign. Karen Jackson, President of UPSE, said, “the UPSE Has a Heart campaign is about supporting community organizations that make a real difference for Islanders across the province; organizations like Santa’s Angels, Joy Riders Therapeutic Riding Association, and the PEI Special Olympics, just to name a few.”

Jackson thanked UPSE members for making this possible, where a small portion of their union dues goes towards the campaign so the Union can give back to communities across the province. She believes that “Unions have a strong role to play in helping others and strengthening our communities.”

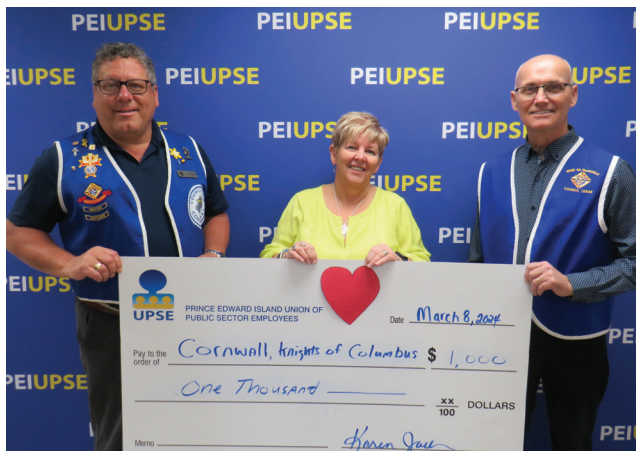
Through UPSE Has a Heart 2024 campaign the Union was able to assist twenty-four organizations with donations ranging from \$250 to \$2,000. “These organizations do amazing work, often volunteer work that includes many of our members. UPSE is proud to help these wonderful organizations that provide supports for Islanders,” said Jackson.



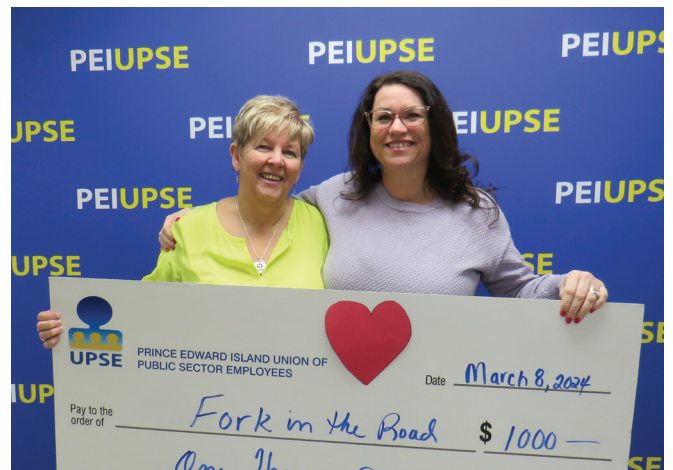
Air Cadets, \$500



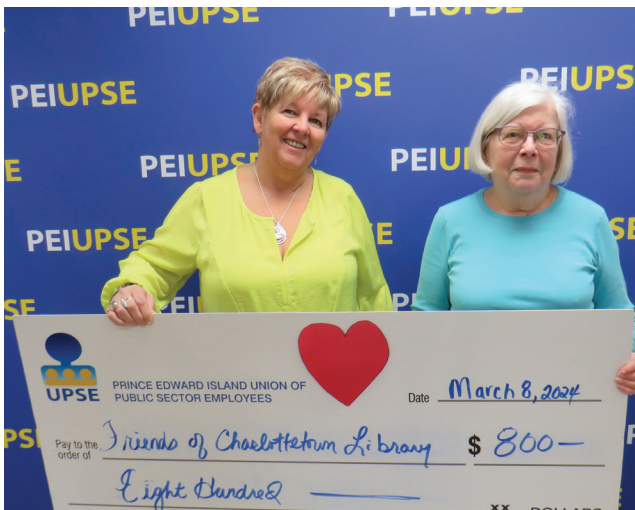
Cat Action Team, \$450



Cornwall, Knights of Columbus, \$1,100



Fork in the Road, \$1,000



Friends of the Charlottetown Library, \$800



Make a Wish PEI, \$1,000



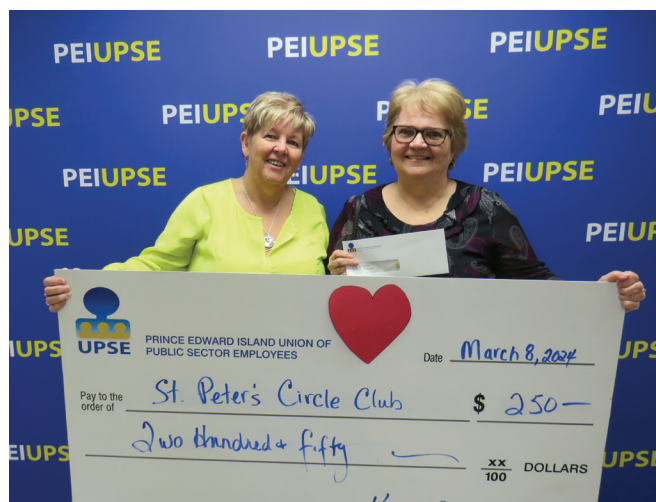
PEI Air Cadet League, \$500



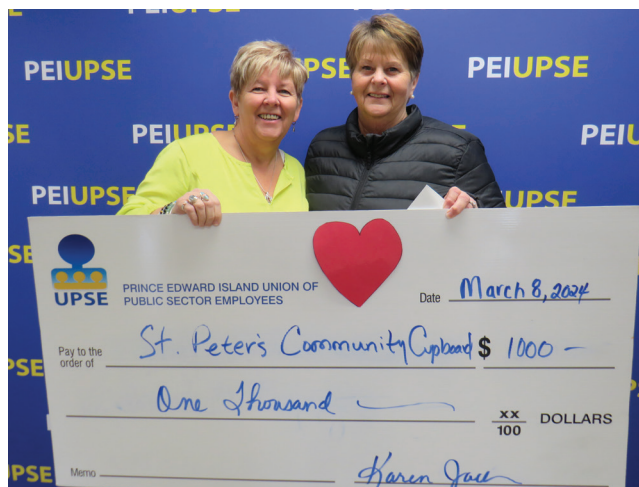
PEI Special Olympics, \$850



Santa's Angels, \$2,000



St. Peter's Circle Club, \$250



St. Peter's Community Cupboard, \$1,000



Three Rivers Seniors Group \$250



Victoria Quilts, \$800

Please see the complete list of this year's recipients (not all pictured):

Joy Riders Therapeutic Riding Association

Santa's Angels

Cornwall Knights of Columbus

Children's Wish Foundation

Silver Threads Seniors Club

Friends of the Charlottetown Library

Victoria Quilts Prince County

Montague Christian Church

Faithworks Centre

Fork in the Road

Air Cadets 60 Squad

PEI Air Cadet League of Canada - PEI Provincial Committee

Special Olympics

St. Peter's Circle Club

Three Rivers seniors Group

Voluntary Resource Council

Westisle Power Lifting Team

PEI Citizens Advocacy

Hernewood Intermediate - Community Service-Learning Program

St. Vincent de Paul Food Bank

St. Peters & Area Community Cupboard

First Baptist (Food Pantry)

The Village Summerside

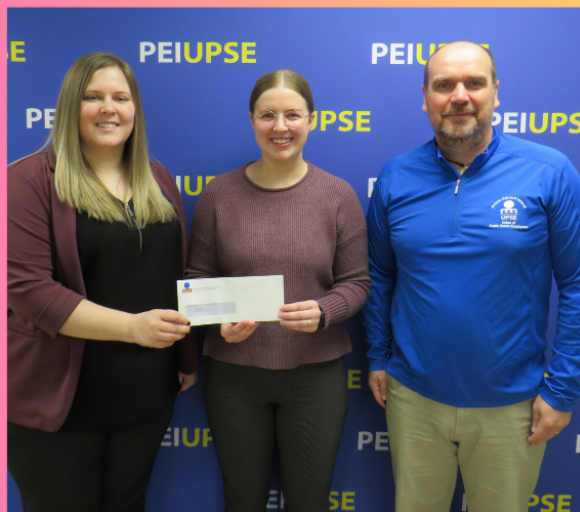
CAT Action Team of Prince Edward Island

Steve Mollins, Young Worker Bursaries

Steve Mollins was a strong union advocate for our youth and young workers. It was his dedication and inspiration that inspired UPSE's *Young Workers Committee*, in his memory, to establish bursaries to highlight the importance of the Union's young worker membership. Steve was a long time member of UPSE's Board of Directors and a knowledgeable Union activist. The Chair of UPSE's *Young Worker Committee*, Kathlene Smallman, said Steve always encouraged her to learn as much as she could about the Union, and to get more involved. "He played a big part in where I am now, and I'm probably not the only young worker/UPSE member that would say that."

The *UPSE Young Workers Committee* is proud to award two (2) \$500 bursaries annually to UPSE members in good standing **age 35** or under who are pursuing part-time or full-time continuing education from a Canadian public education institution while continuing to work at an UPSE bargaining unit workplace. This year's winners are Georgia-Rae Connolly (**Local 7, OT Activity Worker**), and Nonie Lyon (**Local 8, Collaborative Mental Health Social Worker**). Congratulations to the winners!

2024 Young Worker Bursaries!



Pic L-R: Kathlene Smallman (Chair, UPSE Young Workers Committee), Nonie Lyon (Local 8, Collaborative Mental Health Social Worker), and Jason Rendell (UPSE Executive Director).

Would you like to receive an e-copy of *The Advocate* instead of a paper copy? Please contact UPSE by emailing (peiupse@peiupse.ca) or call the UPSE office at **902-892-5335**, or toll free at **1-800-897-8773**.

Mark Arsenault, Wildlife Habitat Technician

Mark Arsenault is a dedicated member of UPSE and is the Union's Second Vice President. He is also a *Wildlife Habitat Technician* with PEI Forests, Fish and Wildlife (FFW) (since 2006). A main part of Mark's portfolio is administering the Protected Areas Network of PEI. Mark says that he's fortunate to work with like-minded individuals from watershed groups, Island Nature Trust (INT), Nature Conservancy of Canada and Ducks Unlimited Canada to help them, Government and private landowners protect land through the *Natural Areas Protection Act* and *Wildlife Conservation Act*.

Mark's appreciation for nature began at a young age. For those old enough to remember, he was inspired by Ranger Smith from Yogi Bear. As a youth, Mark enjoyed learning and teaching outdoor skills like map and compass, hiking, camping and canoeing through the Cub-Scouts and Royal Canadian Army Cadets.



Pic L-R: Mark Arsenault (UPSE 2nd Vice President and Wildlife Habitat Technician).

One of the perks Mark has working with FFW is his extension and education work which ranges from wildlife talks at schools to teaching outdoor skills with 4-H and community groups. Other fun activities include wildlife surveys and working with the Division's OHS committee. Mark believes that going to the woods to work, play or enjoy is a great privilege we have and helping people to do so safely is rewarding. He also assists with Hunter Education and Canadian Firearms Safety.

Another part of Mark's job that some would consider a drawback, but to him is a big perk, is the flex-hours. On occasion, he may go to an evening meeting to promote wildlife or land conservation. Some days may involve early mornings or late evenings to conduct surveys. Early morning translates to getting up at 4:00 am to be in the woods listening for birds at or 30 minutes before sunrise. A late night has involved starting an hour before sunset to travel or prepare for the survey, owls in spring and bats through the summer.

Mark began working with Forestry and INT in 1993, and over the past 30 years worked in several roles helping to protect and conserve natural environments and ecosystems. Within FFW he works with a group of individuals who take a lot of pride in what they do from growing trees, monitoring wildlife populations, managing our natural resources and helping landowners reach their resource goals. He is proud to wear the FFW logo.



Mark explained that the Division he works for has been very supportive of his Union activities for decades. In his opinion management at FFW believe educated workers are productive workers and that our Union has secured many employee benefits. FFW has supported me in pursuing my many Union interests from being a shop

steward, local director, member of the executive, facilitator on educational days, trustee with the Public Service Pension Plan and to be involved with some National Union (NUPGE) activities.

As a *Wildlife Habitat Technician*, Mark has found that many of our forest professionals, environmentalists, private landowners and the general public have a desire to protect nature for a variety of reasons, some compatible and some not so much. In the end, he believes that working with conservation and preservation techniques, we can protect and grow our protected areas network for generations to come. From when Mark was 6 or 7, he has always enjoyed the out-of-doors. A career goal for him was to find a way to bring people to wilderness or wilderness to people, and as an outdoor educator/facilitator and through his career with FFW and volunteer activities, he has achieved that by helping people to safely enjoy and conserve nature.

Bargaining Update

Health PEI

Bargaining update

The collective agreement between UPSE and Health PEI expired on March 31, 2023. Negotiations with Health PEI commenced in June 2023 and have continued, with our most recent bargaining date being June 19, 2024.

The UPSE bargaining team and Health PEI (the Employer) have reached an impasse on key provisions, leading to a breakdown in discussions. The Parties attempted to reach a deal at the table, but unfortunately, there were fundamental differences.

UPSE's position is that the Employer does not value all bargaining units the same and undervalues the daily contributions of UPSE's dedicated members. Both UPSE and the Employer will now seek conciliation in an effort to reach a tentative agreement.

Please stay tuned for updates on the Union website and socials.

Morell and Area Early Learning Centre

The collective agreement between Morell and Area Early Learning Centre and UPSE will expire on August 31, 2024. A meeting is scheduled with the membership for June 26 at 5:30 p.m. to discuss any proposals.

Garden Home

Bargaining update

The collective agreement between Garden Home and UPSE expired in June 2023. Bargaining commenced on January 18 and 19, 2024 and a tentative agreement was reached. Ratification kits were mailed to the membership. The first Ratification kit failed to be ratified which sent a strong message to the employer that more had to be done. The employer took up this challenge and sought a new deal with Government which saw substantial

increases in the employer's funding models. UPSE is happy to announce that the members will be receiving new ratification kits in the next week. Vote online, mail back, or cast your vote at the ratification meeting on July 11, 2024 from 2-3 pm and 4-5 pm in the UPSE Boardroom. The deadline for returned ballots at the Union office is 3:30 p.m., July 12, 2024. The vote count will take place on July 15, 2024.

Did You Know?

Did you know that UPSE has a member discount list? The discount list is a directory of businesses which offer discounts to UPSE members upon presentation of your union membership card.

See the list here: <https://www.peiupse.ca/members/discounts/>



Holland College Faculty

Bargaining update

The agreement expired on March 31, 2024. Proposal forms were sent out and a meeting was held to choose the bargaining team. A number of meetings have occurred with the employer to negotiate details of a merged agreement between ATHI and Holland College Faculty Collective Agreements. Once this is completed the merged agreement will be sent out to the bargaining units for ratification. If the merged agreement is ratified by the membership, negotiations for enhancements (including wages) will begin.

ATHI

Bargaining update

The agreement expired on March 31, 2024. Proposal forms were sent out and a meeting was held to choose the bargaining team. A number of meetings have occurred with the employer to negotiate details of a merged agreement between ATHI and Holland College Faculty Collective Agreements. Once this is completed the merged agreement will be sent out to the bargaining units for ratification. If the merged agreement is ratified by the membership, negotiations for enhancements (including wages) will begin.

Whisperwood Villa

Bargaining update

The collective agreement is not set to expire until July of 2026. UPSE has sent a request to the employer to open the agreement for a wage re-opener.

Holland College Admin and Support

Bargaining update

The collective agreement between Holland College Administrative and Support, and UPSE expired on March 31, 2024. The bargaining teams have met to exchange packages and began negotiations on June 12 and 13, 2024. The parties have scheduled further meetings for July 2 and 3, 2024, and will continue negotiating a new collective agreement.

Community Connections

Bargaining update

The collective agreement expired on March 31, 2024. Proposal forms were sent out to the membership and bargaining took place on May 22 and 23, 2024. A tentative deal was reached. UPSE awaits wording on the agreement from the employer at which time ratification kits will be sent to the membership.

National Public Service Week! June 9-15, 2024

Karen Jackson, UPSE President, participated in the BBQ at the PAB Courtyard in Charlottetown to celebrate public service and cultural diversity. UPSE members enjoyed the BBQ, along with the entertainment, socializing, and the beautiful weather.



Day of Mourning Ceremony

I was honoured to participate in the Day of Mourning ceremony in Charlottetown. The Day of Mourning is a time to remember and honour workers who have lost their lives or were injured in the workplace. I want to extend my sympathies to the workers, families, and individuals who have lost loved ones. The Day of Mourning is about remembering and reaffirming our commitment to improved workplace health and safety. Every worker has a right to a safe and healthy workplace, and the right to refuse unsafe work.

We need to continue to work to create a workplace safety culture in Prince Edward Island and across the country. We need to forge ahead with a renewed respect for the importance of all workers, and a commitment to strengthen workplace safety legislation, education, and enforcement.

**Karen Jackson,
UPSE President**



Pic L-R: Karen Jackson (UPSE President) and Carl Pursey (President, PEI Federation of Labour).

UPSE Education: Welcome to UPSE

Members are participating in the Union's flagship course called Welcome to UPSE! This introductory course teaches members about UPSE's history and evolution in PEI.

Participants also learn about how the Union works, and how they (as members of the Union) can get more involved. It's great to see so many new members being engaged and making their Union work. UPSE Proud!



Jackie McCaughey, UPSE's Accounting and Technology Coordinator

Dear members, we will be featuring UPSE's staff members in *The Advocate* to highlight their role at the Union office and how they might be of assistance to you. We'll also tell you a little about each staff member to help you get to know them better. Jackie has been a valuable part of the UPSE team since 2014.

She started her professional career in the insurance industry becoming a Chartered Insurance Professional. After 15 years in the insurance business, she decided to move on to the Union of Public Sector Employees. She started out as the *Information Technology Coordinator* and then moved on to a new position, *Accounting and Technology Coordinator*, which is what she currently holds.

Jackie does the day-to-day accounting for UPSE as well as for the *Health Development and Training Fund* administered by UPSE. She can answer any questions the membership might have on travel claims, Union business salary repayment, booking out of province Union trips, questions related to technology and more.

She spends most of her spare time with her husband, Dennis and their son, Colton! She loves supporting Colton in all his endeavours, including driving him to his sporting events - which she wouldn't change for the world! When there is some free time, she loves to get out on the golf course, but she has yet to master this game. That doesn't prevent her from going out socializing with her friends and playing the game she loves to hate at times! :)

Jackie invites members who have any questions, to please reach out anytime, as she would be happy to assist you in any way she can. Call 902-892-5335 or email jmccaughey@peiupse.ca



Jackie McCaughey, Accounting & Technology Coordinator

Members: Please Update Personal Contact Information

The union encourages all members to take an active role in the union by keeping up-to-date on union news and issues. To ensure you receive the most recent UPSE communication materials, please update your contact information with the union.

Call Norma Jarvis at the union office (902-892-5335, toll free 1-800-897-8773) to ensure your current contact information is up-to-date, or to make changes.

You can also visit the UPSE website and go to the [update your contact information](https://www.peiupse.ca/members/update/) (<https://www.peiupse.ca/members/update/>) link under the *Members* tab on the homepage where you can update your information on-line.

**Get the Latest
from UPSE!**

Talking About Unionism with Students!

President Jackson had the honour of speaking to two wonderful groups of students in the *Human Resource Management Program* at Holland College, and in the *Marguerite Connolly RCW* class. Karen looks forward to these lectures every year and loves to share her Union experience and perspective with the students.

Karen talked about the importance of labour relations, collective bargaining, the grievance process, and the benefits of belonging to a union. She also stressed how important it is for members to get involved in their union. Unions function only to the extent that members are engaged with the issues, are taking part in their Local meetings, union educational offerings, and are acting in various roles to help fellow members ... such as being a Steward.

It's also key for members to be up-to-date and aware of their collective agreements so they can better navigate the workplace in regard to their rights and responsibilities as members. President Jackson emphasized the broader role that Unions play in society as well, and how Unions can effect social change that is to the benefit of all workers.



UPSE Health Development and Training

The *UPSE Health Development and Training* fund is available to PEI UPSE members who are employed with Health PEI and are covered under the Health PEI Collective Agreement. The fund provides employees with monies to improve required skills to better perform current job responsibilities as well as future job opportunities. You will find the application and guidelines on the PEI UPSE Website (www.peiupse.ca).



Please ensure that you use the current application form found on the UPSE website for all of your development and training requests. Contact Bryan Burt at bsburt@peiupse.ca or call (902) 892-5335 for questions and inquires about the fund.

UPSE Development and Training Fund Civil Service Employees

The Development and Training Fund, a joint initiative of the Government and the PEI UPSE, is designed to provide funding to employees for learning opportunities, encourage employee participation, benefit career development and improve government service delivery to the citizens of this province. You will find the application and guidelines on the PEI UPSE Website (www.peiupse.ca). For more information please contact Tara McGuirk at (902) 368-6175, or email her at tmcguirk@gov.pe.ca

UPSE Steward Conference

The UPSE Steward Conference was a great success! Topics included a social media refresher looking at questions such as: Can members get in trouble at work for social media comments? What about members' right to free speech? What kinds of comments or posts are going to be a problem? Participants also discussed diversity dynamics in the workplace regarding the provision of safe workplaces to prevent discrimination. What are the employer's and union's responsibilities? If you have any questions about the above topics please contact your Steward <https://www.peiupse.ca/about/how/executive/> or contact UPSE and speak with a Labour Relations Officer (902-892-5335) or peiupse@peiupse.ca



Don't Forget to Read Your Collective Agreement!

Have you looked at your collective agreement recently? Your collective agreement is a legal contract negotiated, agreed to, and signed by your employer and your union. Both the employer and the union are bound by law to abide by its terms and conditions. It's like a "rule book" that defines your working conditions and sets out the rights and responsibilities of the employer and the workers.

In your collective agreement you will find provisions outlining your wages, vacation, sick leave, working conditions, rights and benefits. If you run into a problem at work and believe your employer is not following the collective agreement don't hesitate to talk with your Shop Steward or call UPSE to speak with a Labour Relations Officer.

By reading and understanding your collective agreement you will become more aware of the rights and benefits you have in the workplace. You will also be in a better position to protect yourself, if, and when, any problems arise at work. To see your collective agreement visit the UPSE website (www.peiupse.ca) and look under the "Collective Bargaining" section. If you would like a hard copy please contact the UPSE office by emailing peiupse@peiupse.ca or call 902-892-5335 or toll free at 1-800-897-8773.



Do You Want to Join UPSE?

Do you know a group of non-unionized workers who might be interested in joining UPSE? If so, please contact Bryan Burt, UPSE Education and Organizing Officer, at 902-892-5335, toll free 1-800-897-8773 or e-mail bsburt@peiupse.ca

UPSE offers a wide range of membership services including professional staff to help you when problems arise in the workplace (full grievance support), experienced negotiators to bargain fair and equitable contracts on your behalf, a wide range of educational opportunities, and a benefit program for members.

PEI UPSE is proud to represent over 5000 members in the public and private sectors.



Attention UPSE Retirees!

Local 19 (Retiree Local)

If you're retired and haven't signed a retiree membership card and wish to do so can contact the union office at 902-892-5335, toll free 1-800-897-8773 or e-mail peiupse@peiupse.ca

Dues are \$1 per month. Meetings are held four times a year. To receive Local19 meeting notices you must have an email on file with us.

Those who were with CIVIL / HEALTH / WCB - we will contact the Employee Benefits Division of the Department of Finance to deduct \$1.00 per month from your retirement cheque. All other bargaining unit members (than those noted above), please contact the union office to discuss payment of dues each month by cheque or cash at the union office.





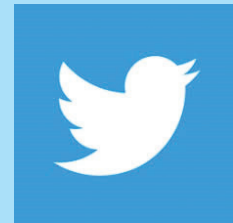
PEI UPSE

PEI UPSE is now on Facebook!

Search for the **“PEI UPSE”** page and click on **“Like this page.”**

**Follow PEI
UPSE on
Twitter!**

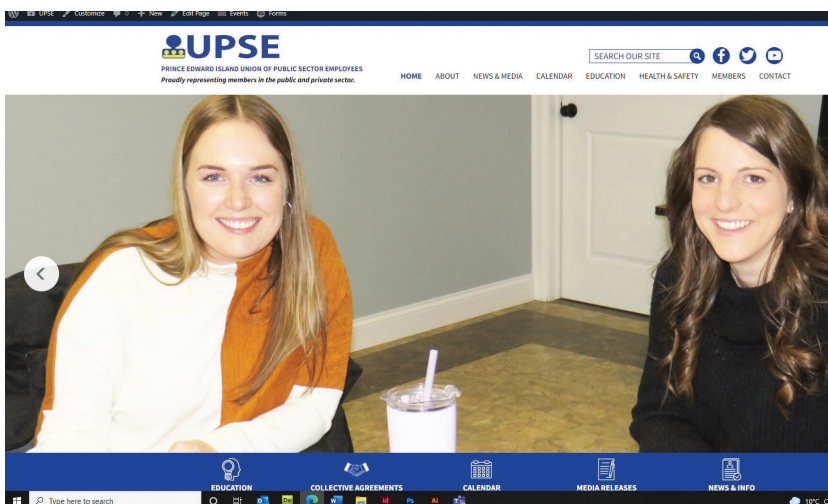
*Follow PEI UPSE
on Twitter @PeiUpse
for the latest on UPSE
news, events,
labour and social issues.*



UPSE Website!

Check it out at www.peiupse.ca

Facebook and twitter feeds are on the new site as well.



Thank Unions for ...

- ✓ Weekends
- ✓ 8 Hour Workdays
- ✓ A Minimum Wage
- ✓ Paid Overtime
- ✓ Breaks During Work
- ✓ Workplace Safety Standards
- ✓ Child Labour Laws



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“UPSE is pleased to work with Cooke Insurance to offer our members preferred rates. The Cooke's Home & Auto Group Plan will help you save money. I value our relationship with Cooke Insurance and the benefits it provides to the membership as a whole.” - Karen Jackson, President, UPSE

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Insurance first.