2021 Annual General Meeting 20th May at 4pm

Public Service Alliance of Canada Local 901

The Union of Teaching Assistants, Research Assistants,
Teaching Fellows, and Postdoctoral Scholars.
Queen's University - Kingston, ON
www.psac901.org

Disclaimer: The following gathering will be held through digital means (including videoconferencing and webcam usage). You are not required to turn your camera on. This gathering will not be recorded by the host.

AGENDA

1.	Quorur	m Check					
	Information Officer notes # of Composite Unit 1 and Unit 2 members in attendance						
2.	Elect Secretary						
3.	PSAC Statement on Harassment						
4.	Land Acknowledgement						
5.	Rules of Order						
	Moderator familiarizes attendees with the rules of order.						
6.	Adopt	and Approve the Agenda					
7.	-	re the Minutes from the 2020 Annual Ge	neral Meeting				
8.		ive and Stewards' Council Reports	O				
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	d.	Vice President Research Assistants	page 9				
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	f.	Treasurer	page 11				
	g.	Co-Chief Stewards	page 12				
	h.	Equity Officer	page 14				
	i.	Occupational Health and Safety Officer	page 15				
9.	Commi	ttee Reports					
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	b.	Grievance Committee Report		page 18			
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	d.	Sectoral Collective Agreement Compari	son Group Report	page 19			
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10.	Executi	ve Officer Elections					
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	•	Vice President Community Relations					
	•	Vice President Postdoctoral Scholars					
	•	Vice President Research Assistants					
	•	Information Officer					
	•	Treasurer Co-Chief Steward					
	•	Co-Chief Steward (Grievances)					
		Equity Officer					
	•	Occupational Health and Safety Officer					
11	Rargair	ning Committee Report					
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Rules of Order Cheat Sheet

Bourinot's Rules of Order at a Glance:

To Do This:	You Say This:	May Interrupt the Speaker?	You must be Seconded ?	Is this Motion Debatable ?	Is this Motion Amendable?	What Majority is Required?
Consider something out of its scheduled order.	I move the agenda be amended in order to deal with the following item:	NO	YES	NO	NO	Majority
Postpone further discussion on a motion until later in the meeting	I move that the motion be tabled until	NO	YES	YES- only to time	YES	Majority
Postpone consideration of a motion until a future meeting	I move that the motion be postponed until	NO	YES	YES	YES	Majority
Have a motion studied more before voting on it	I move that the motion be referred to 	NO	YES	YES	YES	Majority
Raise a matter previously tabled (if at a different time from when it was decided	I move that the motion about be lifted from the table	NO	YES	YES	YES	Majority

To Do This:	You Say This:	May Interrupt the Speaker?	You must be Seconded ?	Is this Motion Debatable	Is this Motion Amendable?	What Majority is Required?
Reconsider a motion already voted on earlier in the meeting	I move that the motion about be reconsidered at the next meeting" and provide written notice that the matter be raised at the next meeting	NO	YES	YES	NO	2/3 Majority
Object to something which prevents your continued participation (e.g. excessive noise)	Point of Privilege	YES	NO	NO	NO	No vote taken, chair rules
Seek clarification from the previous speaker	Point of Information	YES if urgent	NO	NO	NO	No vote taken, chair rules
Overturn the ruling of the chair	I challenge the chair on	YES	YES	YES	NO	Majority
Enquire about procedure or consequences	Point of Order	YES	NO	YES, only to the point	NO	No vote taken, chair rules
Object to Incorrect procedure being used	Point of Order	YES	NO	Yes, only to the point	NO	No vote taken, chair rules



EXECUTIVE REPORTS

President's Report Rohit Revi

I feel grateful to have been able to serve the local as its' President from November 2020 to May 2021. When I was elected to this position, I envisioned my core responsibilities as ensuring institutional continuity through the pandemic and ensuring that we are well positioned for a good round of Bargaining in 2021. As a result, a lot of my work this year has been coordinating and facilitating the work of the different officers and components of the local this year, and I feel grateful to have been able to work alongside the Executive Team of 2020-21. I am happy to present the following summary of my tenure as the President as well as the challenges we face:

Staff Contract

This year was significant also because our Office Manager of six years, Emily Boehmer, completed her time with our local. We were able to subsequently hire Terry McKever, who has a treasure of knowledge and experience. Terry has worked quite diligently to ensure that our local remains organized and that we are able to adapt to the new workflow. We are thankful for her commitment. The Staff Management Committee has also offered Terry a renewal of her contract till December 2021 and hope to keep her with us longer.

Grievances

We favourably settled our grievance with the University on the issue of contract security for International Students who were locked out of the country due to the travel and public health restrictions. Our members may continue to work from their countries of residence for the duration of the COVID-19 Emergency. Canan and Harsha, our Chief Stewards, have also struck a Grievance Committee this year to help keep track of and analyse any Collective Agreement violations.

Financial Report of the Local

When our executive team took over, there was still work to be done in ensuring that the Financial Audit for 2019-20 could be carried out. Our Treasurer Ethan has been incredible in performing this work and has also lined us up nicely with excellent financial practices going forward. The Budget for 2021-22, presented before you this meeting, recommends an increase to Stewards' compensation and a renewal of the Gender Affirmation Support Fund, among other things.

Bargaining

Since their election in SGM of December 2020, our Bargaining Committee has been meeting weekly, and working to identify and articulate membership priorities. We conducted Focus Group Discussions for TA, RA and TF Employees, consultation meetings with student groups working towards greater equity at Queen's and have analysed our grievances of the past. We also launched our membership survey for the general membership last month. The results of this work are before our membership this year for ratification.



Social Commitments of the Local

We have been able to successfully administer the bursaries approved at AGM 2020, and I wish to thank Prerna, our equity officer, for all her work on that. Prerna has also worked to create a network of self-identifying Asian Graduate Students within the local towards mutual support and solidarity. The **Affordable Housing Working Group** of the local has been very committed and active this year, to build capacity of the local on the fight for affordable housing in Kingston. Thanks to Doug Yearwood (VPC), Luna Yang (H&S Officer) and others for their work on that. The group's report is before the membership, and I hope we renew their mandate this year too.

Website

Our union's website has been redesigned for reasons of greater organization and accessibility. Thank you to Brittainy, our Information Officer, and to member Phillip Oni for the work on that.

Challenges

- 1. Our local has followed the system of issuing cheques for expenses, in line with PSAC's practices and to ensure that we are able to keep track of the signing authorities. With remote work this year coinciding with issuance of numerous bursary cheques, this practice has proved to be tedious keeping track of mailing addresses and any cheques lost in mail, having the cheques signed in a coordinated way etc. It was Terry's hard work that ensured the success on this front this year. I recommend to the President and Treasurer of the coming term to work alongside Terry and PSAC Regional Office in developing compensation practices that could be operated remotely as well.
- 2. With the relatively long break from our physical office space in Robert Sutherland Hall, we will have two entire cohorts of Graduate Student Employees who might not recognize our physical office, regular meeting halls and schedules, and the infrastructural possibilities offered by the union on campus. As we are likely to return to on-campus work at some point next year, I recommend we do an educational drive on campus alongside orientation week to sustain our visibility and recognition.

Thank you for participating in the General Meeting, and for strengthening our wonderful union.

Yours in solidarity,

Rohit Revi (He/Him)

President, PSAC Local 901

Vice President Community Relations' Report Doug Yearwood

As Vice President Community Relations, I have helped in building our local's relationship within the Kingston labour community. Our local has been well represented at various inter-union meetings, be it through our Public Service Alliance of Canada regional area council, our Queen's University union groups, or at the district labour council. Moreover, since the Political Action Committee moved to strike an Affordable Housing Working Group (AHWG) at the December 11, 2020 Special General Meeting, as promised, I have been very active in issues related to graduate student worker housing conditions. Our AHWG developed a housing survey that received 426 responses. This survey provided our local with important information which highlighted areas where our union could play a positive role in helping to address some of our housing concerns.

Related to housing, I played an instrumental role in orchestrating the Student Workers Will Not Pay for the Housing Crisis inter-union event. This event was co-hosted alongside Carleton's CUPE 4600 and University of Ottawa's CUPE 2626. Over 10 university student worker locals from across Ontario participated in this event, which was aimed at building an inter-union organizing committee to mobilize membership over the long term. This organization, entitled The Housing Organization of Unionized Student Employees (or The HOUSE) aims to raise consciousness around the housing conditions the majority of graduate student workers find themselves in, and will be meeting over the summer to plan protests and other activities across campuses in the fall. Our local has played a vital role in building momentum around this, and it is important that we continue to support these efforts. Housing is a labour issue because workers need a place to live and survive. As organized workers who produce value for the university, we can leverage our power to improve our housing conditions. We should continue to support grassroot, community housing initiatives while also taking the lead on campus to fight for our memberships housing needs, including paying less rent. Rent prices continue to skyrocket in Kingston, and it is only through organized action that we will be able to change the status quo. Unions can play an important part in solving the crisis by providing resources, organizing direct action, activating people, and building a movement capable of changing the system.

As VP Community Relations I have also attended and organized numerous housing events related to the Kingston community in general. I have taken an active interest in assisting Kingston tenants, working within the Katarokwi (Kingston) Union of Tenants (KUT) to assist in the struggle for housing justice. Outside of funding and tuition problems, the lack of affordable housing in Kingston is one of the biggest issues facing graduate student workers and postdocs. While organizing as workers is important, it is also important to support community-focused housing initiatives. For the past few years, PSAC has opened our office doors to KUT. Prior to the pandemic, KUT used our office space to connect with one another and organize events. Since the pandemic, KUT has remained active and 901 members are more than welcome to join and get involved in organizing, which was confirmed at the March 29 inter-union housing event, where we were encouraged by KUT organizers to help in research and policy studies, among other things. KUT's growth and connection to PSAC Local 901 is a positive development for the union local at the community level, as grad students involved with KUT got to know workers from other parts of Kingston who were also interested in organizing around affordable housing. Workers from all backgrounds share common interests in securing affordable housing, and grad student workers have been able to find common cause and develop closer links with workers from other sectors in Kingston, helping create dynamic community space in the process.

As VP Community and as an organizer within KUT, I have participated in Kingston City Council meetings to demand elected officials act in a progressive and responsible manner to uphold agreements on providing adequate housing and address Kingston's housing crisis. Throughout the COVID-19 crisis, I have hosted interviews and participated in events with tenant organizers. I have also orchestrated numerous small fundraisers for those displaced from the Belle Park encampment and helped organize events to demand that the City respect their human rights obligations as it pertains to housing. Last fall, I worked within PSAC's Kingston Area Council to mobilize around housing affordability. The Area Council is now committed to fighting for the interests of members who are tenants and will lend its support by pressuring politicians on tenant-friendly policy demands and assisting with organizing events, mobilizing members, and promoting educational material on housing. Given that many PSAC 901 members live precariously as tenants, fighting for housing justice is something that is in our local's interest to fight for.

I am proud of the presence PSAC Local 901 has had in organized labour. Through the Kingston District Labour Council (KDLC), which is a space where unions gather to share their struggles and organize actions, we have collaborated with workers throughout the city and been able to learn more about the problems these workers are facing. For example, over the course of the last year or so, PSAC Local 901 members played an integral role in developing educational materials around defunding police. Through Queen's Unity Council, which is a group composed of representatives from every union local with workers on campus, I—and others on the executive—have worked with a number of workers from different unions to organize a collective response to the University regarding health and safety concerns for the upcoming year. Concretely, we affirmed our resolution to fighting for the interests of our members and other workers by ensuring the university was providing janitorial staff with proper cleaning materials. Most recently, we pushed within Unity Council to gain support for the Pivot the Clock campaign, which is aimed at granting funding extensions to graduate student workers at Queen's impacted by the pandemic. Our local's engagement within Unity Council—especially when COVID began and demands were circulating around a tuition waiver—helped foster closer relations with representatives from Queen's University Faculty Association, which later assisted us when we bargained for contract variances in our letter of understanding last summer.

Moving forward, I think it is important for the Community Relations Vice President to continue focusing on housing, as positive inroads have been made on this front, as well as staying on top of the latest relating to the pandemic, such as the potential return to campus. It is important that the VPC continues to foster closer relationships with organized and non-organized labour alike, on and off campus. Our involvement in the community is appreciated by many, and we owe it to the workers in this city to commit ourselves to fighting for them, as they make our life in Kingston more enjoyable and liveable.

Vice President Postdoctoral Scholars' Report Ramjee Kandel

I have started raising the concerns of Postdoctoral Scholars at Queen's University as soon as I took the oath at the Special General Meeting where I was elected. During my term, I have been working actively to help my fellow friends in giving useful information and suggestion. Based on my portfolio, I have been involved internally with the PSAC Executive and attending Childcare Bursary, Postdoctoral Fellow and Budget Committees' meetings. Similarly, I have highlighted the rights of unit 1 and 2 members at the



starting of fall semester. I have also contributed my significant time about the housing issues of postdocs through the affordable housing group. Besides this, I have been involved in postdoctoral activities in the following way.

Unity council and Joint Union Management Committee

I have attended the several meetings of the Queen's Unity Council, a group composed of representatives from every union local with workers on campus, learning about their struggles amidst COVID-19, offering support, and ensuring that they were informed of the issues that our members face, particularly related to health and safety.

Similarly, I have attended a meeting with Faculty Relations to talk about administering the collective agreement. I have highlighted the issues of the postdocs who are also involved in teaching. These are informal meetings outside of bargaining—opportunities to bring up issues that the Postdocs have been facing.

Vice President Research Assistants' Report Hannah Hunter

It has been an honor to hold the position of VP Research Assistants for another term. Of course, this term looked much different from the last- it has included more Zoom meetings than I wish to count, as well as a lot of uncertainty. As well, it has prompted particular struggles for RAs in the general increased precarity of the pandemic, for instance in the adjustment to working from home/ hybrid models. As an international student, I am acutely aware of the particular issues faced by migrant student workers. In 2020, I was stuck out of Canada for 5 months. For this reason, I was overjoyed to see the Local's win in ensuring pre-established student migrant workers can still hold employment if based overseas during the pandemic. The 901 executives are always here to talk if you are facing adversity in your employment at Queen's, and it has been a joy to be part of such an active, activist executive this year.

In the role of VP RA, the main priority this year has been getting ready for bargaining. This has meant ensuring that the concerns of RAs are properly represented in our upcoming contract negotiations with the employer. This year, I have spoken with some of you at RA bargaining focus group sessions, and many of you have filled out the online bargaining survey- providing invaluable information about your experiences working as an RA at Queen's. So far, some of the overriding RA-related concerns that have come up include health and safety concerns (particularly returning to the workplace), misclassification of labour (discussed in more detail below), equity-related concerns, and questions about intellectual property. The bargaining committee will fight for your rights, ensure more employer clarity, and ask for better support for your employment. If you missed these sessions or the survey, it is never too late to reach out with ideas or concerns you have about bargaining-vpra.psac901@gmail.com

A major priority this term has been activities related to the current RA/ GRAF misclassification grievance. Since the unionisation of RAs in May 2019, we have observed a significant drop in the number of RAs at Queen's, and we believe this may be because more and more duties are being wrongly assigned within Research Fellowships (GRF/ GRAF). This matters, because GRF/ GRAFs are not recognised as employees, and thus not formally a part of the union. Unionized RA student workers at Queen's have a guaranteed hourly wage, sick pay, health and safety protection, and access to union representation and advocacy.

Because of this, we want to make sure that all workers are correctly classified: **GRF/ GRAF awards are** only for research tasks that directly contribute to your thesis or project. If your duties are not a part of your own graduate research completion, you should have an RA contract. Being misclassified means, usually, that you have been given a GRF/ GRAF award when you should have an RA contract.

In order to address this, I have been working with the RA/ GRAF grievance committee to both support the formal grievance process and to ensure this information about potential misclassification is shared widely. Recently, I created an informative PDF that outlines the definitions of RAs and GRAFs, how you can tell which contract you have, and how this impacts you and your rights. Beforehand, the only information about these differences were created by the university, and we do not think these were clear or comprehensive enough. We hope that this document can support members going into summer and fall contracts to discuss their employment status with their supervisor, or to contact PSAC 901 if there are any issues. I held office hours about these issues in April, and hope to hold more in the future. This summer we also plan to share this information in faculty meetings to ensure that they are clear which classification is correct for different duties, and the serious negative impacts of misclassification on student workers.

This year, I have also continued the day-to-day activities of the union, for instance helping individual members to solve their particular workplace-related issues. As well, I have been involved with the 901 Social Justice Committee, and sat as a local representative on the PSAC Kingston Regional Women's Committee.

In solidarity, Hannah Hunter (she/ her)

Information Officer's Report Brittainy Bonnis

This executive came into office in strange times and for the six months of our tenure have strived to overcome all sorts of obstacles - many of them communications related. As the Information Officer a lot of what I do happens behind the scenes where I work to help executive members and committees get word of their work out to the local membership and to the larger Queen's and Kingston communities. As you read the reports in this program you will see that that is A LOT OF GREAT WORK! I have spent some time rethinking and reformatting the newsletter and working on ways to get the information in it to more people, fostering relationships with groups on campus and in the community to share communication resources. We added <u>Instagram</u> to our social media platforms along with <u>Facebook</u> and <u>Twitter</u> and I sincerely hope that in the very near future they will have more photos of us together and fewer Zoom meeting announcements. I have spent a whole lot of time with Phillip Oni on the new website. Our hope is that the new design will make the information you want and need easy to access as, especially in this bargaining year, we need to be able to communicate with and hear from our members. If you have suggestions for the website send them to info.officer@psac901.org. Finally, I have been working on new communication policies and protocols for 901 with an emphasis on accessibility - we are committed to removing communication barriers that exclude any of our members! This year I sat on a bunch of committees including Union Structure, the Budget Committee and the Bargaining Committee, I

attended Steward's Council meetings and did a lot of Health and Safety training – all of it has been challenging and rewarding work. It has been a privilege to work with this executive who in addition to being great co-workers were also a great personal support to me during a very difficult time for my family. All the work this executive has put in assures that 901 will continue to be well served when life beyond zoom resumes – I hope to see you all there.

In solidarity, Brittainy

Treasurer's Report Ethan Mitchell

It has been an absolute pleasure to have served as Treasurer for the Local since last Fall. During a very difficult and chaotic time, I have been glad to work alongside the other executive members, the stewards, and the membership to make sure that our local has been able to steer through this crisis and continue to serve student-workers at Queen's.

When I took on the role, we were facing a number of difficulties, from a COVID-related delay in our dues payments from PSAC, to having to piece together our records after moving online, to a long period of staff transition. These were challenging, but we were able to navigate through these difficulties and continue to serve the membership through events, actions, direct services, and organizing around collective bargaining.

Over the recent months, we have not only dealt with the immediate disruptions, but have had the chance to update some of our financial practices. This ranges from updating our tax procedures, going over our methods for collecting and storing important information, and to establishing more regular check-ins and a more collaborative work environment with our Office Manager. I hope that by bringing in these everyday governance changes, we will ensure that the functioning of the local remains smooth in the future, and that we will be prepared for any other disruptions which might arise.

The Budget Committee has also been meeting in preparation for the AGM, and has proposed a new budget for this coming year. Our conversations have focused not only on the specific expenditures we would like to plan for, but also significantly on the overall context which informs our Local's spending. This involves for one, making a distinction in our accounting between recurring and non-recurring expenses. Recurring expenses are expected to be incurred each year at approximately the same maximum value, and will thus need to be accounted for by reliable and similarly recurring income sources. Non-recurring expenses are approved for one year, are expected to be reassessed and renewed at the beginning of each fiscal year, and can thus be accounted for by non-recurring income sources, such as carry-over from previous years and withdrawals from our savings. Since our recurring expenses will often be below their maximum, there will usually be a carry-over to fund the non-recurring spending next year. If our recurring expenses wind up close to their maximum, or if income is significantly lower than projected, this model ensures that all expenses will still be met with minimal unexpected depletion of our reserves, since recurring expenses are prioritized, and non-recurring expenses are only paid out of income that has already been received.

This 2021-2022 budget proposal is informed by the fact that our local has consistently run surpluses in the past, and will therefore attempt to put some of that money to use by withdrawing it for one-time/non-recurring spending to organize around providing more for the membership in areas such as mental health and housing. Building on the recommendation of last year's Budget Committee, our income projection is based on the average income across the 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 fiscal years. The Budget Committee has decided to calculate income based on the average of the two most recent years for which there are audited financial statements, as we believe it will up-to-date information without being overly distorted by fluctuations in membership numbers and dues income.

Each of our significant new proposals for spending relates to the core goal of organizing in order to strengthen the collective power of our bargaining units. The proposal for increased Stewards' compensation is meant to help strengthen the Stewards' Network, which is one of the most important structures which connects individual members to the rest of the local. The spending on bargaining is meant to ensure that we are able to continue to engage with the membership, and to run an effective campaign so that our collective agreement can reflect the priorities of the members. The spending on the Affordable Housing Working Group is meant to further empower the members within our local who have been organizing around housing this year, so that they can continue and expand their work to push for more affordable housing and to serve members directly. As a union, our strength and our ability to deliver both come from the active engagement and empowerment of our members. In discussing how to spend our saved-up money, this was a primary consideration.

Going forward, I am excited to see the Local continue to evolve, build, and carry forward its vital organizing work.

In solidarity,

Ethan

Chief Stewards' and Stewards' Council Reports Harshavardan Thyagarajan & Canan Sahin

The local's Co-Chief Stewards share the responsibility of organizing departmental steward representation and collectively act as points of contact for members' labour concerns, including conflict and grievance-based issues. We have continued to support members during these unprecedented times in answering contract questions and continuing to recruit active Stewards. While Co-Chief Steward 1 (Harshavardhan Thyagarajan) has been primarily responsible for networking and convening Stewards' Council regularly, Co-Chief Steward 2 (Canan Sahin) has dealt with the grievances & conflicts and tried to look for effective ways to address the concerns raised by members. In addition to convening the Stewards' Council regularly, Chief-Stewards formed a Grievance Committee, a Union Structure Committee and actively contributed to the Bargaining Committee, as well as chairing the Sectoral Collective Agreement Comparison Group that was formed under the Bargaining Committee.



Stewards' Council

We have had regular monthly meetings after the AGM in October, where the new executive officers were elected. There have been five Stewards' Council Meetings, on November 20, January 27, February 24, March 25, April 27 so far. The stewards were regularly updated about the activities of the Local and the network was very effective in mobilizing the membership around the Bargaining Survey, Focus Group Studies, Affordable Housing Survey and grievance-related communications.

Steward Network and Recruitment

We currently have 31 stewards. Historically, we have been very strong in the departments that belong to the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and this trend has been kept. We also managed to recruit some new stewards from the Faculty of Health Sciences and the Faculty of Engineering and Applied Sciences. However, going forward, we need to have a stronger network that will allow us to see the workplace related dynamics across the faculties more clearly.

Shop steward training

As an executive elected in October, one month after the Fall semester began, we were not able to deliver an immediate training program to our Stewards and members. However, with the support of our Regional Representative, we designed an online training module and delivered it in January. In the online training module, we included sections on Collective agreement interpretation, Grievance handling and Union resources. We will modify the training for our Post-doctoral Scholars, as well.

Grievances

The local has not filed any new formal grievance over the last six months. However, it assisted the resolution of many grievances in the informal stage by organizing meetings with the department heads, faculty deans and Faculty Relations Office. These grievances included improper termination of the TA contract, violation of vacation right, transferring hours of contract between the terms, RA job advertisement for a lower wage than agreed upon and lack of hiring transparency.

The Local has two ongoing grievances with the employer from last year:

- RA/GRAF grievance: This grievance is in the process of arbitration and in the first hearing, the local won its initial demand which involved production of GRAF information for certain departments before and after the unionization of RAs by the employer.
- Accommodation Grievance: This grievance has a Human Rights Court dimension to it and the local will be fighting for improvement for some of the points of grievances on the Bargaining table this year.

This year has been particularly challenging for our Local since our Bargaining preparations coincided with the radical shift to online employment. Despite the challenges, we have had a great attendance and an amazing enthusiasm from our Stewards in the past year.



Equity Officer's Report Prerna Subramanian

During this year, the Equity Office successfully administered three bursaries that were approved in the last AGM: a UHIP refund for migrant members, a hardship bursary for equity-seeking members, and a bursary to financially support gender confirmation procedures for trans members of our union. With the onset and continued effects of the Pandemic, the Social Justice Committee was able to convene events post-haste like a Sharing Circle for Asian students. The Social Justice Committee members, however, were active in creating research around bargaining demands for this year, especially creating survey and report on mental health services. The SJC also committed to working for the #PivotTheGradClock Campaign in collaboration with the SGPS, which has gathered immense momentum in the university and is ongoing.

Administration of Bursaries

We administered the UHIP Bursary, Gender Affirmation Bursary and Hardship Bursary in the beginning of the new year. All the three bursaries reached their capacity (GA bursary is still open) and reflected the need around the areas of: mental health, UHIP administration problems, anti-racism on campus and gender/sexual discrimination. We aim to both expand the scope of the bursaries and also reduce the need to have rebate systems for certain issues that can be bargaining demands.

Bargaining Work

The Social Justice Committee's focus was then Bursary Administration in the first half of the year and we moved onto creating bargaining goals out of the trends that came out of our bursary administration itself. A mental health on campus report was worked on alongside a survey, which also led to multiple "Equity" Consultations on counseling services on campus and anti-racism practices the union should be fighting for. We thank Sarah Smith for creating the report that has helped define important bargaining trajectories for better mental health services on campus. We also worked with the Human Rights and Equity Office to conduct an equity census which has given us a fairly clear idea about the demographic inequality on campus we are working with.

Solidarity Practices

We recently organised a Asian Sharing Circle post the tragic events in the US, and realised that the office should hold space for informal, collective care for our student workers. We signed onto the PivotTheGradClock campaign in order to fight for funding extensions for graduate workers on campus. We have extended support to Just Recovery's Climate Action Efforts, especially in demonstrating against the TMX Pipelines. We also recently supported the fight against austerity that has systematically broken Laurentian University. We also worked with Defund YGK and hired a researcher for conducting an analysis of police budgeting in Kingston and we hope to use the work done in the future for defunding/abolish events in the community.

Childcare Bursary

We had a high number of applications for the Childcare Bursary this year as well, given the circumstances brought about the pandemic. We received around 30 applications in total. I would like to thank our ex



Office Staff Emily and incumbent staff Terry for all the work they have done towards the successful administration of bursaries in the confusing time of the pandemic.

Health and Safety Executive's Report Luna Yang

For the 2020-2021 academic year, JHSC inspections have been disrupted due to lockdowns. When inspections were available, I have stayed in touch with committee members via email. In the meantime, I have shared other health and safety trainings from PSAC901 with all union members. These trainings involved worker rights during Covid-19; best practices during Covid-19; as well as other relevant safety information. These trainings were important to raise broader awareness across the union around health and safety. I have also worked with our staff person to coordinate compensation for members. Additionally, I also served as a member of the JHSC committee and conducted inspections and attended meetings within my committee.

In other health and safety work, I have also created a Covid-19 safety plan for our staff person. I have also raised the issue around IERPs and fire safety as a pressing problem and met with members who have been affected. Working with other executive members, I have helped raise awareness about the importance of mental health as a bargaining issue, which has become an important topic in our bargaining efforts. Given the importance of equity in health and safety work, I have also written statements on behalf of the union and am working with other members to push for more equity services at Queen's.

Much of my time has been spent with the Affordable Housing Working Group this year. This group was started by the Vice President Community Relations and pushes for more affordable housing for graduate students at Queen's and in Ontario. Given the existing precarious housing conditions for graduate students that have been exacerbated by the pandemic, this is an important health and safety concern for our members. I have been involved with the creation of our survey; the hiring of our team; and conducting research around housing conditions. I have spent the most time in developing a social media presence for the group to encourage more members to participate.

I am extremely grateful to have been able to work with everyone this year and to be a part of the executive during such an unprecedented time. Thank you for this opportunity.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Bursary Administration Committee Report Chair: Prerna Subramanian

Committee Members: Canan Sahin, Rohit Revi, Sabrina Masud, Skylar Kovacs, Rohit Shukla, Sofie Shannon, Harshavardhan Thyagarajan, Hannah Hunter

The Bursary Administration Committee was struck at the October 16th Special General Meeting of PSAC Local 901. The committee was mandated to research and explore areas where the local could using our large budget surplus to financially support members, and to set up a bursary system for allocation of funds. This committee is composed of members also in the Social Justice Committee, and the overlapping members were committed to administering the three new bursaries that were approved in the last AGM.

Timeline of Bursary Administration Committee's work

1. 28/11/2020: Bursary Program Platform Decided (Jotform), Date for Bursary Announcement Decided (New Year)



- 2. 20/01/2021: Approval of Allocation for Hardship and UHIP Bursaries. It was decided that UHIP payouts will be maxed to 200 dollars for those with dependants and \$150 for those without. Hardship bursaries were paid out max \$400 dollars or less depending on expenses.
- 3. Gender Affirmation Fund was decided upon and approved as and when the applications came in without scheduled meetings.
- 4. For the future, the committee suggests that we may continue with the bursaries in the upcoming year for Gender Affirmation Fund and expand UHIP bursary's budget if possible. With regards to Hardship Bursary, what it will comprise of might change in accordance to the bargaining trajectory.

Summarised PSAC 901 Bursary program

Bursary	Eligibility Criteria	Application requirements	Application deadline	<u>Form</u>
UHIP rebate - Intl students	International students who are members of Unit-1.	UHIP enrolment slip/Fee statement indicating payment of UHIP fees.	Claims can be made only once in an academic year. Rolling basis until funds are exhausted. CAP REACHED (40)	UHIP rebate - Intl students
Hardship bursary for equity seeking groups	Graduate union members (Unit 1 and Unit 2 both) who are considered as equity-seeking members. This includes: women, LGTBQ2S+ community members, Indigenous persons, racially visible community members or community members with disability. Have an immediate and/or demonstrable financial hardship.	Itemized list of expenses.	The applications will be received and reviewed by the Bursary Administration Committee on a rolling basis through the year, until the funds are fully allocated. CAP REACHED(30)	Hardship bursary for equity seeking groups
Gender affirmation bursary	Graduate union members (Unit 1 and Unit 2 both) who identify as two spirit, trans, non-binary. The local understands 'trans' to be a broad and inclusive term that includes genderqueer, transgender, transsexual, and gender variant among others.	Receipts and relevant list of expenses.	Rolling Basis until funds are exhausted. (3 applicants received bursaries, 1 slot left)	Gender affirmation bursary

Grievance Committee Report Co-Chairs: Harshavardhan Thyagarajan & Canan Sahin (Co-Chief Stewards)

Members: Avi Friedlander, Kabir Shahani, Annika Fuernsinn, Hannah Hunter (Vice President RA)

Grievance committee was struck to recruit stewards from different disciplinary backgrounds to assist the Local with its ongoing grievances under strict confidence. Based on our study of the previous grievances, we have identified the following areas as important:

- RA classification Grievance
- Employer harassment
- Rolling hours contracts
- Training payments
- Hiring transparency
- Accommodation policy

The Committee has particularly focused on the RA classification grievance this year, by creating channels of communication in the steward network and general membership. The Committee has been supported by the VP RA (Hannah Hunter) and her work in this matter has been instrumental in educating the members about the differences between GRAF and RA. As the arbitration process is still going on, we recommend that Grievance Committee be re-struck in the coming year, tasked with assisting the Local with the on-going grievances under strict confidence.

Union Structure Committee Report Chair: Canan Sahin (Co-Chief Steward)

Members: Justyna Szewczyk, Astrid Hobill, Harshavardhan Thyagarajan (Co-Chief Steward), Brittainy Bonnis (Information Officer), Ethan Mitchell (Treasurer), Doug Yearwood (VP Community), Luna Yang (Health and Safety Officer), , Rohit Revi (President)

Union Structure Committee has been an active one in our Local since 2015. While the initial objective of the committee when it was struck was to hire an office staff to assist the local and create the portfolio for the new staff, in the following years, it also dealt with the executive structure, the compensation system, portfolio optimization and creating bursaries for equity seeking groups. This year, the Union Structure Committee discussed issues that would contribute to equalization of portfolios across the Executive officers as well as a more equitable compensation system, based on a comparison with sibling locals and other academic sector unions with similar capacity to ours. While we have not reached conclusive decisions around these issues, we recommend the Union Structure Committee should be re-struck to help the Local to horizontalize the Executive service and pay.



This year, the committee also recommended the Budget Committee to increase the honorarium system for our Stewards to 400 dollars per annum. We believe this will have a positive impact on our stewards' network and provide a better system of honorarium for the labour our stewards putt into the Local. Another recommendation made to the Budget Committee was the renewal of Gender Affirmation Bursary.

Sectoral Collective Agreement Comparison Group Report Chair: Harshavardhan Thyagarajan (Co-Chief Steward)

Members: Robert Foreman, Astrid Hobill, Annika Fuernsinn, Canan Sahin (Co-Chief Steward), Rohit Revi (President)

Co-Chief-Steward also chaired a study group under the Bargaining Committee to conduct a detailed comparison of the Collective Agreements in the sector. A presentation was made to the Bargaining Committee about the findings. Below you can see the areas of recommendations made to bargaining committee:

- Leaves of absence
- Health and safety
 - Mental health provisions
 - Accommodation
 - Harassment and discrimination
- Hours of work
- Appointment transparency

Mobilization Committee Report Temporary Chair: Canan Sahin (Co-chief Steward)

Members: Rohit Revi (President), Astrid Hobill, Avi Friedlander, Brittainy Bonnis (Information Officer), Harshavardhan Thpyagarajan (Co-Chief Steward), Justyna Szewczyk, Joshua McEvoy, Doug Yearwood (VP Community), Prerna Subramanian (Equity Officer), Tanya Iakobson, Craig Berggold, Ethan Mitchell (Treasurer)

This committee was struck to create membership mobilization for the Unit 1 bargaining demands by hiring mobilizers and an online campaign coordinator, designing a mobilization plan for the Summer and Fall terms. It held only one meeting so far on May 11. The committee has brainstormed ideas that could help membership outreach and mobilization in its first meeting. The members of the committee will receive mobilization training in the last week May and from the first week of June, the committee will draft a mobilization plan. Due to the online nature of work during the Summer term, mobilization strategies will focus on social media campaign as well as creating alternative channels of communication. As for the Fall semester, depending on the nature of work, mobilization committee will create ways to increase membership awareness, engagement and pressure through departmental meetings, faculty-based orientation plans, orientation meetings, to name a few.

Affordable Housing Working Group (AHWG) Report Doug Yearwood

"Our stipends are really not sufficient for the cost of living in this town": The State of Graduate Student-Worker Housing in Kingston, Ontario.



Introduction

At a Special General Meeting in December of 2020, PSAC 901 members voted in favour of a tenant resolution and supported the launch of a working group dedicated to organizing around issues pertaining to our members ability to access affordable housing. The tenant resolution called on local unions to mobilize their membership around issues of housing affordability, interact with community-based groups organizing around similar issues, and advocate for policies that benefit tenants. Because the vast majority of our members are tenants, at the Special General Meeting members saw it fit to support this resolution (see Appendix).

The mandate of the AHWG is to organize around and serve the interests of graduate student workers who struggle with accessing affordable and adequate housing. Accordingly, the AHWG seeks to raise awareness, provide education, conduct research, and participate in direct action and mutual aid work to address our memberships' needs. The AHWG strives to build relations amongst PSAC 901 members around the issue of housing, but will also work and collaborate with other community organizations in the Kingston area as they see fit. The AHWG believes that housing is a human right. Our objectives are to build a housing coalition and organize a movement that is capable of addressing our housing affordability concerns in Kingston. This will require mobilizing 901 membership and interacting with community organizations whose interests align with the proposed mandate and objective of our group. The AHWG plans to continue conducting research, hosting educational events, disseminating information, and participating in direct action and mutual aid to the benefit of our members and our community.

Over the course of the past five months, more than 30 people have expressed interest in or have organized within the AHWG. Over this time, we have developed and conducted a survey that over 400 members participated in, organized and participated in an inter-union housing event with other academic sector workers from across the province, and have developed a social media infrastructure to reach more members in the coming months, and hopefully years. This report is intended to inform members about the ongoing efforts of the AHWG and relay key

AHWG Organizing Efforts

Our AHWG played an instrumental role in organizing and participating in an event on March 29 entitled "Student Workers Will Not Pay for the Housing Crisis" (see program here). PSAC Local 901 co-hosted this event alongside Carleton's CUPE 4600 and University of Ottawa's CUPE 2626. With more than 85 student workers participating across 10 academic sector local's across the province, participants agreed to mobilize local unions, develop demands at the bargaining table, work in solidarity with grassroots tenant activists and integrate their perspectives into our unions and workplaces, and carry out research related to the rise in unaffordable housing in our communities. In our breakout room discussion which centred around Kingston, we heard from community organizer from the Katarokwi (Kingston) Union of Tenants Ivan Stoilijkovic and 901 members, who discussed how many people are not aware of their rights as tenants and other topics, like the need for a movement around non-market housing. As part of the action plan stemming from this event, participants were given the opportunity to continue organizing under the banner of "The HOUSE" (The Housing Organization of Unionized Student Employees). The HOUSE "The HOUSE" is a unionized student-worker led network for mobilizing, organizing, and relationship-building between the labour movement and housing affordability activism. Over the summer, participants will begin to pursue organizing in anticipation of a day of action in Fall 2021. The

AHWG intends to play a positive and strong role in this new organization, and will work in conjunction with grassroots community and labour organizations to organize around other issues related to housing affordability.

AHWG members also took the time over the past few months to build infrastructure on social media to help expand our reach and visibility to 901 members and the broader community. Members are encouraged to join our Grad Students for Affordable Housing PSAC 901 Facebook group (link here). As we continue to grow, we expect to turn this page into a source of information about upcoming events, ongoing affairs, and share other media (memes, infographics, etc.) that spur on discussion and add to discourse around housing affordability.

In sum, the AHWG made positive steps forward since its inception in December 2020. Moving forward, the AHWG will begin to organize 901 members, participate in community organizing, host educational events, do direct outreach for members in need of support, and more. In the conclusion to this report, the AHWG makes recommendations for how 901 members can continue to support this worthwhile cause.

The Survey

By the Numbers

Who we heard from

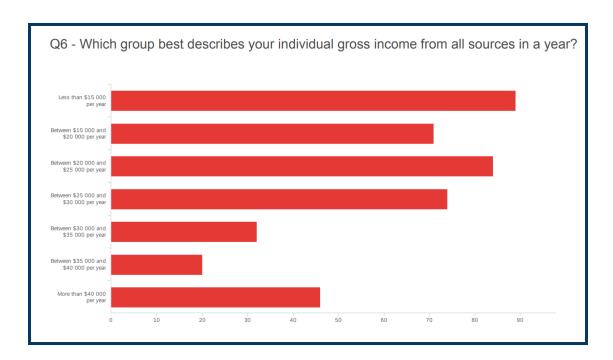
We received 426 total responses to our housing survey which provided complete data for approximately 370 respondents . Of the total number of PSAC 901 members who completed it, 47.65% were Masters students while 46.48% were doctoral students. The remaining respondents were postdoctoral students (3.52%) and professional students (2.35%). A majority of respondents (70%) were first and second year graduate students. Although 73% of PSAC 901 members who answered the survey were domestic students, international students represented a significant share of respondents at 27%.

83% of respondents reported their current residence as Kingston, Ontario while 12.97% currently reside elsewhere. Approximately half of our survey respondents have lived in their current dwelling for less than one year. In total, 92.61% of respondents indicated that they are currently tenants, and only 27% of members report living alone. Of these PSAC 901 members, 45% report renting from an individual landlord while 35% currently hold a lease with a property management company.

Cost of Living

The majority of respondents (58.65%) reported an annual income of under \$25,000 per year, while 38.46% reported an annual income of less than \$20,000 per year (Figure 1). Students reporting less than \$15,000 dollars per year formed the largest group of respondents (n=89), followed by students making between \$20,000 - \$25,000 per year (n=84, figure 1).

Figure 1: Individual gross income from all sources per year

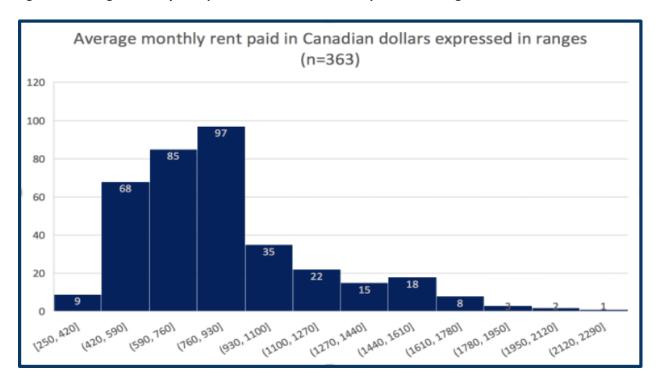


Most respondents do not live by themselves because doing so is not affordable, and as such pay less than the average rent for a one-bedroom apartment in Kingston. A total of 72.75% of respondents reported living with at least one or more person, with the plurality (41%) reporting one roommate (Figure 2). The average monthly rent paid was reported as \$854.55, placing an estimated 88.94% of respondents in core housing need.¹

Despite the fact that average rent prices fall short of the average for the City of Kingston, it is worth noting that due to the inadequate amount of income and funding academic sector workers and graduate students receive, many have limited choices in their housing preferences. As the data explains, many live with other people against their wishes, live far from campus, can not leave their unit for more adequate housing options, find it easier to stay in an inadequate housing arrangement than move to something less affordable, go without certain amenities, etc. Members living in Queen's community housing pay less on average than those living in private market housing, and community housing

¹ The Canada Mortgage Housing Corporation (CMHC) states that a "household is said to be in core housing need if its housing falls below at least one of the adequacy, affordability or suitability, standards and it would have to spend 30% or more of its total before-tax income to pay the median rent of alternative local housing that is acceptable (meets all three housing standards)" (2018).

Figure 2: Average monthly rent paid in Canadian dollars expressed in ranges



The average cost of rent for graduate student-workers was noted as contributing to financial distress by a majority of respondents. 28.65% of our surveyed population indicated that they experience financial stress as a result of paying rent often or always (Figure 3). A further 28.11% of respondents occasionally experience financial distress, while 43.24% reported rarely or never experiencing such distress (Figure 3).



Figure 3: Financial distress related to housing affordability



Access to Student and Community Housing

71.22% of respondents did not apply for a tenancy at a rental property owned by Queen's University or indicated that they were not sure if they applied. A total of 28.79% of people (n=116) indicated that they applied for such a tenancy (Figure 4). Of this group, 61% successfully received a tenancy while the remaining 39% did not (Figure 4).

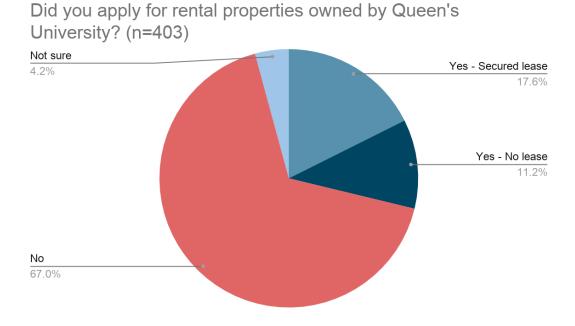


Figure 4: Access to rental properties owned by Queen's University

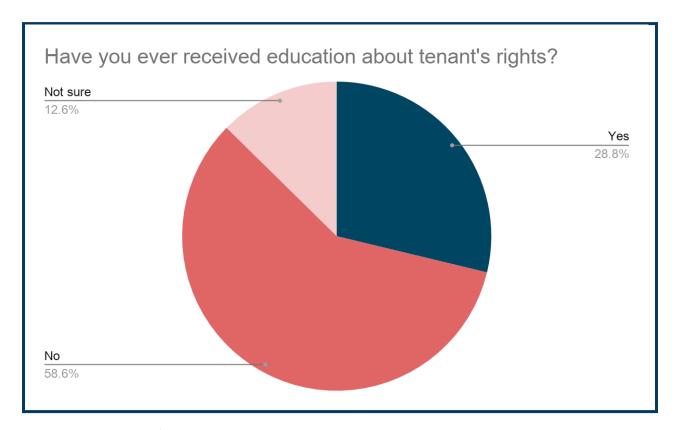
Among students who indicated that they had applied to Queen's Community Housing, such tenancies were highly sought after relative to the private student rental market, as will be discussed in the following section of this report

Navigating Tenancies in Kingston

Graduate student workers reported diverse experiences navigating Kingston's housing landscape, interacting with landlords and accessing adequate housing. 16.89% of respondents reported experiencing some kind of problem with their current landlord, while the remaining 83.11% indicated that they had not. Additionally, 71.23% of PSAC 901 members surveyed did not report receiving education about their rights and responsibilities as tenants. Prior to signing a lease, only 5% of

respondents attempted to access legal advice related to their tenancy. Of those who sought legal advice, only 4 people indicated that they did not receive said advice..

Importantly, the majority (58%) of 901 members have never received education about their rights as a tenant. Around 12 percent of members indicated they were "not sure" if they have received information pertaining to their rights as a tenant (Figure 5).



Student Experiences of Inadequate Housing

Background and Methods

Survey respondents were invited to provide qualitative, open-ended written responses at two primary points throughout the survey. Immediately following question 16, "Have you experienced any problems with your landlord?", respondents were given the option to explain the nature of these problems. Similarly, question 21 invited participants to "tell us about this survey, about your housing experience, or any housing issue that will provide us with more information so that we can fight to address your needs?". After reviewing the qualitative survey, a significant majority of the qualitative data from both questions reflected graduate student-worker's negative experiences with housing quality and affordability in Kingston, including their interactions with landlords. In order to better understand the experiences of survey respondents, qualitative responses from both questions were grouped together and put through a preliminary thematic analysis using QSR's NVivo qualitative data analysis software. The resulting thematic areas and the quotes that support them represent frequently raised issues and

PSAC 901 %

points of consensus among survey respondents that provide important context to the quantitative data in this report.

1) Housing is not affordable

"Rent is very expensive for a single-person household. After subtracting tuition fees paid every month in instalments, most of my monthly pay is used up to pay rent. With mobile and internet plans also being extremely expensive, the remaining amount is spent on groceries and nothing else. It feels like living alone is penalised."

"I have lived in several student's homes within the Kingston community. Several of which were in terrible condition and landlords refused to address the situations in a timely and efficient manner. It seems the only way to live in a reasonable and safe home in this community is to spend more than you can afford."

"Kingston housing is not adequate for current students. You are paying so much and receiving so little and the properties are very old, dirty and run down."

2) Insufficient Funding for Graduate Student-Workers

"Rent in Kingston, relative to the income provided to graduate students through TAships, RAships, grants, and bursaries, are exorbitant, especially consideration of the excessive tuition fees charged to upper year graduate students, despite their receipt of only a fraction of University services."



"Graduate student base stipend should be adjusted for inflation. My PhD base rate is the same as my father was paid in 1989."



in

"Likewise, I think that the rate at which housing prices are rising needs to be matched in kind with the rate at which we, as grad students, are paid for our work as TAs, RAs, TFs, and in funding packages."

 $ilde{''}$ My rent, utilities, and internet costs eat up over 70% of my monthly income. Please help us get paid more. $ilde{''}$

3) Housing affordability limits life choices

"While yes, I live alone, I am not an 18-22 year old undergrad. I'm a 30 year old adult trying to finish a PhD who likes to work at home and likes peace and quiet. I should not be expected to go get roommates to get by without devoting half my income to rent. Graduate student funding needs to take account of cost of living in this city or Queen's will become a university only for the upper class and moneyed families."

4) Unique barriers for international students

"It is very difficult for international students to find an affordable housing. The housing price in Kingston is expensive. Queen's housing is very limited and it is not helpful for international students. Looking for a house prior to my arrival in Kingston was a very stressful experience."

"It is disappointing to have not received support from Queens with regard to housing. As Queens know better than anyone, house rent is too high for an international PDF scholar who lives with their family members. Having a new baby we have to move to a larger place, BUT it is not affordable! This going to jeopardize our mental health."

"Some landlord companies are incredibly predatory (especially on International students)."

5) Illegal actions by private landlords

"During my undergrad at Queen's, I lived in an apartment owned by Foundry. They are the scum of the Earth. They tried illegal rent increases, changing my lease from all-inclusive to utilities not included without my consent, were negligent with completing repairs or emergency services in a timely order, and were incredibly rude to students in general."

"In my previous dwelling, concerns about landlord retaliation kept me from speaking up when our landlord was breaking the law. They were harassing me but I didn't have the time/money to move, and worried that a bad reference from them could prevent me from getting a future place. A resource on dealing with these scenarios would have be useful for me. (Examples: entering our unit outside of allowed hours/without the required noticed, removing and donating our personal possessions from the house without asking, removing furnishings they'd provided without notice or replacement, harassing us about 'clutter' in common spaces (ie, any personal belongings that were outside our room)."

"My previous landlord would show up 3 times a week without any announcement and also entered the house that I rented from them."

"While I no longer rent, when I was a renter there were many unethical rental companies I encountered that put illegal clauses in their contracts, or told me that I had to "re-sign" a lease each year."

6) Unsafe housing conditions

"In previous years, during undergrad when money was tighter, I lived in some shitholes. Plumbing would clog weekly, heat to parts of the house would break and never be restored leading to appliances such as fridges freezing/bottles bursting/frozen pipes. I also lived in one place that had knob and tube wiring, no boxes for electrical connections, and on functional smoke detectors. I have had a fire in a house (confined to the oven) which filled the entire house with smoke to the point where we could not stay, but did not ever trigger a smoke alarm. The housing in Kingston is terrible, but I have been able to get away from it by living further away (30 mins) from campus."

"I have a bug infestation in my apartment and when I talked to them about it they brought in some incompentent person and he didn't do anything and didn't listen to what I was saying."

"The unit was full of pests - mice, spiders, house centipedes, silverfish, ants - and was constantly damp and humid due to an exposed-ground basement."

"There was a leak in the apartment upstairs and part of our ceiling and wall broke, having a direct hole with all the wires in the wall and our upstairs neighbour. It took more than 3 weeks for the landlord to fix the issue"

"We had to wait six month to get a window replaced in our apartment last February. We requested the maintenance in September as the window wouldn't close, but it wasn't replaced until February, after which time we had accrued significant heating costs."

7) Unpleasant experiences with private landlords

PSAC 901 &

"Shortly after I moved in there were a lot of renovations that were being done and there was a lack of communication for when they would be entering my unit, how long they would be here, and what was being done (e.g., if the water would be turned off). It was very frustrating for me and caused a lot of stress."

"[The landlord] just stares into the apartment all the time."

"Generally reticent to spend money on upkeep unless pressured repeatedly to do so."

8) Development policy and Kingston's housing market



"Rented a unit in a building under construction. Building wasn't ready for September as planned. Was homeless for a month until it was ready. Tough start to a masters."

"I think heritage restrictions on Kingston properties sometimes deter landlords from repairing or upgrading the houses, and as a result, students are living in dilapidated homes."

"The properties owned by landlords but on a contract with the university allow landlords to break the ontario Tenant act with clauses in the leases. Especially when it comes to notorious landlords like Daphne Dean. The university doesn't actually care, they just let landlords take advantage of students who are too young and poor to do anything about it."

"We need more housing to bring prices down."

"...These are both companies who pressure students to sign new leases so they could bump up the rent more than the Ontario allowable amount, and have both "explained" this under the guise of some Queen's related property thing where they force us to sign these leases in October, months before the May to May lease is up. I don't know why Queen's is affiliated with these companies because a lot of International or even domestic but out of city students look for these affiliations as a guarantee but are misled by this into exploitative contracts."

9) Queen's community housing

"If I may suggest any plans, we desperately need more buildings like John Orr tower and An Clachan to accommodate the students in comfortable housing at a reasonable price. For me, I am already settled in a decent place that I like but my suggestion is for future students and students still looking for a good place to live. I

don't want anyone to go through what I went through. Thank you for listening."

"I was really lucky to have gotten a spot in John Orr - I was on the waiting list, and signed a lease with a pretty predatory housing company at first. With that company, I was able to get back half of my first month's rent because they were able to find someone else. I feel very fortunate to be in John Orr, and feel strongly that we should have more community housing available for graduate students."

"Outside of university housing, I haven't found any affordable housing in town."

"One of the more affordable options is the queens housing, but you're not guaranteed a spot as a grad student and they're far away so...not necessarily great options all around."

"I lived in a different apartment before this September, which had rent that was ~1300 because previously I had been unable to get a spot with Queen's housing."





"John Orr tower Parking should be free and not over \$100 a month. This added cost is unfair when the parking lot is always empty and the other community housing building does not have to pay for parking."

"It is appalling that at John Orr Tower I have to pay an additional \$110 a month approximately for parking when An Clachan gets free parking. I didn't have a choice what housing complex I went into, I was assigned John Orr Tower."

10) Accessible supports and actionable rights for renters

"It is important that we know what are our rights and duties as tenants. Sometimes we don't know what we can or can't do in the apartment or who is responsible if something needs repair, etc. The system in our home country is probably different than the system here in Canada."

"I don't think much change is going to happen if tenant rights are nor (or can not) be enforced. And it's hard to punish landlords that abuse their tenants when most of the demand in Kingston comes from students that don't know better."

"I think education on tenant rights and how to advocate for those rights would be very beneficial."

"I found myself needing to seek legal advice from the university along with the Landlord Tenant Board on how to get appropriate repairs, temporary relocation, and reimbursement of electricity costs (that were a direct result of the repair). The rental company was thankfully quick due to my persistence."

Conclusions and Recommendations

In light of these survey findings, the PSAC 901 Affordable Housing Working Group therefore recommends the following:

1)Support the ongoing efforts of AHWG - including the proposed changes to the budget

In recognizing that the vast majority of our membership has identified in the housing survey that they are not aware of their rights as tenants, it is proposed that we pay two members to participate in a tenants-rights education course. These two trained members would then host monthly office hours for two hours to address questions from members and would be able to connect them with Queen's Legal Aid, Kingston Community Legal Clinic, and grassroots housing / community groups. Further, these members would help coordinate and host an event on tenants rights in Fall 2021.

As identified as a need in the March 29 housing event, the AHWG should be involved in research projects on issues that impact 901 tenants and the Kingston community in general. As such, it is proposed that the AHWG is given funds for two 15-hour contracts for the purpose of researching important housing issues. The AHWG would like to be able to select the proposals through a democratic vote in an AHWG general meeting. The produced research document would be able to help us clearly advocate for positions favourable to our membership and could be used to build educational events, etc.

Finally, in order to ensure that the AHWG stays accountable and active, it is proposed that PSAC 901's budget include funds for a coordinator who would be paid for 8 hours of work monthly. This would roughly break down as follows: 2 hours per month to chair and prepare a monthly meeting, complete with reports; 2 hours per month dedicated to planning events (at least one event per term); 2 hours per month coordinating and distributing material on campus (AHWG material, tenants-rights material, etc)*;

2 hours a month doing community activity (such as postering in graduate student worker neighbourhoods for upcoming events, actions, etc., coordinating with The HOUSE, or whatever else).

This proposal is reasonable for a few reasons. For one, we are attempting to address issues raised in the AHWG housing survey. Second, we are following suggestions and ideas that were raised at the March 29 housing event. Third, we are moving away from charity- and bursary-based models of trade unionism towards activism and organizing, which is important if we want to mobilize and engage with membership on an issue that is clearly important to them.

2) PSAC 901 members should continue to support both community-based tenant organizations like the Katarokwi (Kingston) Union of Tenants and academic sector, labour-led housing organizations like The HOUSE.

Building and participating in an active and well organized movement that provides political education and allows people to get involved in different ways—while doing everything we can to address problems ourselves—will do more to improve our collective position than any petition, discussion with a politician, or government promise ever could. Organization and actual struggle against employers, the state, and the moneyed interests which benefit from the status quo are the best methods of problem solving. Through these experiences, we will all better understand the obstacles in front of us, and the path toward improving our position will be made more clear. Complacency, inaction, and placing our faith in the same parties and politicians who have created this crisis only serves to benefit the same classes and groups of people who benefit from the housing crisis in the first place.

3) Pressure our employer to build more non-market, graduate student worker housing that meets our needs

The feedback we received from the survey made it clear that survey participants desire more non-market housing, and that the private market means living beyond their means. The solution to this is to pressure our employer to build housing that is accessible and affordable to graduate students and academic sector workers. Currently, graduate students and academic sector workers can only access limited non-market housing options, and the private rental market is out of control. Queen's Community Housing includes John Orr tower (124 apartments, 123 1 bedrooms and 1 2 bedroom), Ann Clachan Complex (216 units, 19 buildings, 431 bedrooms), and 62 properties containing 101 units and 315 bedrooms in the University District. More non-market housing alternatives should be made available through Queen's Community Housing Units. We should pursue Queen's University and pressure them to purchase and renovate / bring up to standard the bottom rung of substandard student housing in and around the university district. Graduate students and postdocs, including those with families, could be prioritized for this new part of the community housing stock. This serves two functions; It creates more non-market housing for PSAC 901 members and removes a significant part of the worst offending privately owned housing from the market entirely for the foreseeable future.

4) Finally, we recommend that more people get involved in the AHWG!

Like the union itself, we are made stronger by a more active membership. If housing is an issue that concerns you, we recommend that you get involved. Through more active support, we can grow our capacity, carry out more actions and activities, do better research, and more! We will meet once over the summer and will hit the ground running in the fall. If you are interested in participating, join our Facebook group and email vpc@psac901.org. From there, you will be added to the list of other graduate students and academic sector workers that have worked with us since our inception a few short months ago. There is plenty of work for us to do!

Appendix

December 11, 2020

The Labour Movement Must Fight Evictions and Demand Housing for All

The membership of Public Service Alliance of Canada Local 901 will:

Take action to mobilize local unions and their members to prevent the evictions of disproportionately low-income and racialized tenants, many of whom are union members, due to the implementation of Bill 184 by the Ford government, the impact of the current economic crisis, and decades of austerity across every level of government.

Welcome tenant groups and perspectives in PSAC Local 901. Most tenants are working class people and Council could deepen its understandings of how the local labour market impacts people's housing situation.

Support those groups that are organizing with tenants, such as Legal Clinics, Katarokwi (Kingston) Union of Tenants, Mutual Aid Katarokwi, other tenant organizations, as well as supportive housing and local anti-poverty coalitions through organizing actions with their tenant members against landlords and different levels of government.

Demand that the government of Ontario repeal Bill 184, introduce a ban on COVID evictions, place all units, including vacant ones, under rent control to eliminate the two-tier system, eliminate "renoviction" loopholes, and implement a system of rent-rollbacks so that tenants pay only 20% of their household income on rent. Demand that the government reverse policy on vacancy decontrol, which incentivizes landlords to kick out tenants and hike up rent prices.

Demand that the municipal, provincial and federal governments immediately implement a comprehensive plan to fund and build permanent rent-geared-to-income social and public

housing (where rent is based on 20% of household income) to meet the needs of underhoused and homeless populations of Eastern Ontario.

Urge the Ontario Federation of Labour to support this resolution.

Because:

- Bill 184 weakens tenants' rights and over six thousand eviction applications began to be processed as of August 1, when the Landlord and Tenant Board was re-opened and the emergency freeze on evictions was lifted
- New provisions in Bill 184 overwhelmingly favour landlords in the eviction process, including new provisions that require tenants to be legally savvy or have legal representation. Less than 3% of tenants at LTB hearings have representation compared to nearly 80% of landlords who attend.
- The pandemic has led to a doubling of the unemployment rate in Ontario. According to StatsCan, racialized workers had an unemployment rate more than 50% higher than that of white workers across Canada in July.
- While Canada has acknowledged that housing is a human right, governments, at all levels, have failed to provide adequate permanent social housing. They have instead developed market-based solutions to increase the housing stock which tend to only incentivize developers to set aside "affordable" housing at 80% of average market rent which is unaffordable for most working families.
- Tenant organizing is essential and needs to be done in multiple languages and across the city. Tenants associations need to be created and organized. Tenants need to understand their legal rights and how to seek legal supports from their legal aid clinics. The labour movement has a wealth of resources in terms of organizing with members, financial, supporting coalitions, assisting with mobilization actions and supporting translation needs
- The pandemic, and its disproportionately negative repercussions on low income tenants, racialized members and the homeless, is far from over.

Budget 2020/2021

QAAAAkFAS			
<u></u>	May '20 - Apr 21	Budget	\$ Over Budget
Ordinary Income/Expense			
Income			
Executive Service	72,387.00	52,540.00	19,847.0
Health and Safety	0.00	11,500.00	(11,500.0
Interest acct 1	77.85	100.00	(22.1
Membership Dues	125,318.93	116,155.00	9,163.9
Other Income	18,061.21	18,061.21	0.0
Special Levy	23,484.00	21,316.00	2,168.0
Surplus	25,500	25,500	
Unit 1 Interest acct 5	0.00	50.00	(50.0
Unit 2 Interest acct 3	32.92	50.00	(17.0
Total Income Expens e	264,861.91	245,272.21	19,589.7
Benefits and Bursaries			
UHIP Bursary	7,931.25	6,000.00	
Hardship Bursary	6,000.00	6,000.00	
Gender Affirmation Bursary	8,000.00	10,000.00	
Child Care Bursary	14,278.37	23,000.00	(8,721.6
Total Benefits and Bursaries	36,209.62	45,000.00	(8,790.3
Business Eveness Consul			
Business Expenses General			
Audit and Accounting	759.36	1,500.00	(740.6

0.00

300.00

500.00

1,500.00

(500.00)

(1,200.00)

Capital Expenditures

Donations

Executive Service	62,244.00	72,360.00	(10,116.00)
General Meeting Expenses	391.72	2,000.00	(1,608.28)
Orientation Advertisement	0.00	0.00	0.00
Photocopy & General Advertising	0.00	750.00	(750.00)
Staff Member Salary	31,283.98	37,736.00	(6,452.02)
Total Business Expenses General	94,979.06	116,466.00	(21,486.94)
Dues and Affiliation Fees			
Kingston District Labour Counci	4,794.00	4,794.90	(0.90)
Other	225.00	0.00	225.00
Transportation to Council Mtngs	0.00	150.00	(150.00)
Total Dues and Affiliation Fees	5,019.00	4,944.90	74.10
Office			
Membership software	384.81	1,560.00	(1,175.19)
Office Contingency	118.64	100.00	18.64
Office Equipment	135.34	1,500.00	(1,364.66)
Supplies	1,324.27	1,500.00	(175.73)
Website Hosting	1,646.73	350.00	1,296.73
Total Office	3,609.79	5,010.00	(1,400.21)
Projects and Committees			
Events and Networking	641.84	5,000.00	(4,358.16)
Flying Squad	299.12	1,200.00	(900.88)
Gen. Committee Campaigns & Pub.	0.00	0.00	0.00
Grad Club Membership	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00
Health and Safety Committee	10,806.74	11,500.00	(693.26)
Labour History&Arts Scholarship	500.00	2,500.00	(2,000.00)
Orientation and Outreach	1,238.85	3,000.00	(1,761.15)
Postdoc Committee	0.00	14,405.52	(14,405.52)
RA Committee	2,471.68	3,000.00	(528.32)
Social Justice Committee	3,148.37	5,000.00	(1,851.63)
Stewards Network	3,782.79	4,000.00	(217.21)

Unit 1 Bargaining	2,565.00	4,000.00	(1,435.00)
Website Maintenance	434.74	500.00	(65.26)
Total Projects and Committees	27,889.13	56,105.52	(28,216.39)
Travel and Training			
Conferences	0.00	2,000.00	(2,000.00)
Per diem	0.00	2,000.00	(2,000.00)
Training	0.00	2,000.00	(2,000.00)
Transportation	0.00	2,000.00	(2,000.00)
Total Travel and Training	0.00	8,000.00	(8,000.00)
Uncategorized Expenses			
Total Expense	167,706.60	235,526.42	(67,819.82)
Net Ordinary Income	97,155.31	9,745.79	87,409.52
Net Income	97,155.31	9,745.79	87,409.52
Actual Net Income (not including surplus and carry-over)	53,594.10		

Proposed Budget 202<u>1/2022</u>

1	Ordinary Income/Expense		2021-2022 Recurring	2021-2022 Non-Recurring*
2	Income			
3	Executive Serv	ice	54,734.00	
4	Health and Safe	ety	11,500.00	
5	Interest acct 1		100.00	
6	Membership Du	ues	120,269.00	
7	Other Income**		6,666.00	29,000.00
8	Special Levy		23,484.00	
9	Unit 1 Interest a	acct 5	50.00	
10	Unit 2 Interest a	acct 3	50.00	
11	Surplus			13,600.00
12	Total Income		216,853.00	42,600.00
13				
14				
15	Expense			
16	Benefits and Bu	ursaries		
17		Child Care Bursary	23,000.00	-
18		Gender Affirmation Bursary		10,000.00
19	Total Benefits a	and Bursaries	23,000.00	10,000.00
20				
21	Business Expe	nses General		
22		Audit and Accounting	1,500.00	
23		Bank Charges	120.00	
24		Capital Expenditures	500.00	
25		Solidarity	1,250.00	
26		Donations	1,500.00	

27	Executive Service	66,948.00	
28	General Meeting Expenses	2,000.00	
29	Orientation Advertisement	0.00	
30	General Advertising	750.00	
31	Staff Member Salary	33,000.00	
32	Total Business Expenses General	107,568.00	0.00
33			
34	Dues and Affiliation Fees		
35	Kingston District Labour Counci	4,794.90	
36	CSEU		500.00
37	Transportation to Council Mtngs	208.00	
38	Total Dues and Affiliation Fees	5,002.90	500.00
39			
40	Office Purchases		
41			
42	Mailchimp Sofware	1,560.00	
43	Office Contingency	100.00	
44			
45	Office Computer ***	-	2,000.00
46	Office Supplies	1,000.00	3,000.00
47	Website Hosting	350.00	
48	Total Office	3,010.00	5,000.00
49			
50	Projects and Committees		
51	Evente Compoinne and		
52	Events, Campaigns, and Networking	2,000.00	2,000.00
53	Political Action Committee	1,200.00	
54			
55	Grad Club Membership	2,000.00	

56	Health and Safety Committee	11,500.00	
57			
58	Orientation and Outreach	1,500.00	1,500.00
59	Postdoc Committee	14,405.52	
60	RA Committee	3,000.00	
61	Social Justice Committee	5,000.00	
62	Affordable Housing Working Group		6,600.00
63	Stewards Network	25,500.00	
64	Bargaining	3,000.00	11,000.00
65	Website Maintenance	500.00	
66	Total Projects and Committees	69,605.52	21,100.00
67			
68	Conferences and Training		
69	Conferences and Training	2,000.00	2,000.00
70	Per diem and loss of pay		2,000.00
71			
72	Travel		2,000.00
73	PSAC Training Agreement	6,666.00	
74	Total Travel and Training	8,666.00	6,000.00
75			
76	Total Expenses	216,852.42	42,600.00
77	Net Total Income	0.58	0.00

- * This division between recurring and non-recurring is meant to delineate funds which are consistent between years, and ones which are more flexible. Note: spending being located in the non-recurring category does not mean that it is expected not to be renewed, or that it will disappear after this year, but instead that it is more able to be adapted to changes in income than spending in the recurring category
- ** Recurring column consists of funds transferred from PSAC for the training agreement, non-recurring consists of carry-overs from 2020-2021 fiscal year