

EXECUTIVE REPORTS

President's Report **Astrid Hobill**

This year has been an active one for PSAC 901! After Unit 1 bargaining last year we saw a number of new executive members join our team. After difficulties organizing remotely due to the covid-19 pandemic, this year saw the return of more in-person organizing. We still are attempting to do more things hybrid in order to allow for more accessibility in connecting with the union. With this, we have seen more engagement from the Stewards Council, and have had a number of both returning and new departmental stewards, as well as rank and file members, get involve and spearhead a number of campaigns, projects, and discussions in our local.

We had a number of successful union events this year including and all-member event at the Grad Club in the fall, "Migrant Dispatch" an exhibition at the Union Gallery, a tuition town hall, a couple tuition abolition rallies and socials for postdoctoral fellows and for research assistants. Behind the scenes at 901, this has been a very busy year. We have busily been implementing the gains that we achieved in the last round of Unit 1 bargaining, we have been preparing for Unit 2 bargaining that will be upcoming this year, and we have launched more grievances this year than ever before against the university. Using the grievance process, we have successfully managed to get successful resolutions to many issues concerning members and the local.

I will be stepping away from the position of president after this year. I would like to deeply thank this year's executive, stewards and involved members for the amount of work they have put into the local this year. We have fought back against the employer on multiple different fronts and won on many. We have built solidarity within our local, our community, and with other locals across the province. We focused on issues that we heard from members were important for them below is a brief overview of many of the most pertinent issues that are facing our local, there will be further expansion on these in individual executive and committee reports.

Bursaries

This year we saw the continuation of our childcare bursary, which continues to be important for a number of our members with children. The continuation of our gender affirmation bursary is absolutely necessary given the lack of supports being provided by the university, by December this year, the bursary was depleted. We encouraged those who required it to apply for the newly launched Mental Health and Hardship Bursary with funds won in the last round of Unit 1 bargaining. The scope of our expenses that were reimbursed was broad since the union takes a universal approach to mental health. The first round for this new bursary proved the need in the community. There will be some changes to the way in which the bursary will be run and what will be included in order to best serve our membership. We are also about to launch our Professional Development Fund in order to help reimburse some of the costs that often go along with professional development events

or training; in tandem we will also be launching our own professional development seminars.

Trainings

The trainings around sexual violence prevention and anti-racism have now been implemented by the university after being won in bargaining last year. They are each currently only one hour of paid training and the union currently has no tangible control over the content of the trainings being provided to our members. We are working pushing for improvements to the training and encourage members who have issues with the training or have suggestions for improving them, to reach out to Faculty Relations or the Human Rights Office in order to voice your opinion.

Grievances

There have been numerous grievances that have been filed with the university this year. The most common grievances that we unfortunately need to file pertain to non-payment for hours of work, misclassification of Research Assistants as Graduate Research Fellows and issues of harassment. Through the dedication of the co-chief stewards we have seen the vast majority of these be resolved in favour of our members. Those that have not have currently been sent to arbitration and we will hopefully have updates soon.

Food Insecurity

Throughout the fall we have heard about significant food insecurity within our membership. Besides tuition and rent it proves to be the biggest financial burden for graduate students. Driven by the VP Community, we have created a temporary food fund program to provide members facing acute food insecurity access to giftcards to grocery stores. Beyond our own funds we have solicited donations for the Kingston and Queen's community. At present time we have given out close to \$10 000 to our membership. We have seen an increased need towards the end of the semester as our the stipend that we got at the beginning of the semester runs out. We are looking for ways to partner with others in the community, including the Grad Club, in order to figure out ways in which we can help alleviate this problem in the short-term while working on longer term solutions such as increased wages. We are not the only union on campus struggling with food security, CUPE 229, the union that represents the trades and janitorial staff has a significant portion of their staff that are using food banks, so we are also discussing ways in which we can work together to push Queen's on ensuring proper compensation to membership.

Bill 124

Both our last rounds of bargaining for Unit 1 and Unit 2 were curtailed by Bill 124 which limited public sector increases to 1%. With the huge increases that we have seen to the cost of living, this bill was hugely damaging to our bargaining efforts. Since we bargained, the bill has now been ruled unconstitutional and therefore we were forced to bargain under unfair conditions. We met this month with the university along with other union presidents in order to discuss reopening our contract negotiations specifically over wages, especially since QUFA was able to negotiate outside of the bill. Us along with other unions have as for parity in wage increases to be in line with those that QUFA gained. We need to ensure that with the cost of living crisis we are not falling further behind.

For Unit 1, we need to ensure that any increase to our salaries does not correspond to a claw-back from the university to other portions of our funding packages in the form of grants and scholarships, otherwise any increases we make become meaningless.

Postdoctoral Bargaining

We will be filing on March 29th to bargain for Unit 2's renewed collective agreement. The committee has gathered its priorities and is working with PSAC National in order to present a package to the employer. There will likely also be a call out to all members in order to help with mobilization. We are currently finalizing the bargaining team and they will start bargaining soon and this time they will not be constrained by Bill 124.

Tuition Abolition

In conjunction with graduate students at Western, we began discussing the absurdity of paying tuition as graduate student workers. It is our labour that ensures that Queen's is able to offer the programs that it does and it is our labour that makes the research at this university possible. As such, we have started a campaign for tuition abolition led by rank and file members to pressure Queen's, and Ontario more generally, to abolish graduate student tuition. There has been significant engagement from the community since tuition payments are one of the large factors in keeping graduate students in financial precarity.

Graduate Research Fellowship (GRF)/ Research Assistant (RA) Arbitration

This year, we have continued to address a grievance around Graduate Research Fellowships and Research Assistants. Queen's is systematically moving positions that should be classified as Research Assistants to Graduate Research Fellowships, which removes the members from the union, and provides them less protections as they are not protected by the collective agreement. Arbitration on this matter will continue over the summer and into the next year. If you are doing research assistant work, let us know so we can double check that you have been properly classified and are receiving the correct wages.

Office Manager

We finally have a full-time office manager for the local, Tracie Dixon, whom a large number of our members have probably interacted with. Her assistance has been absolutely necessary this year, she has sorted out numerous office practices that had gotten lost in the shuffle over the years due to high turnover in the executive and office staff and the lack of continuity brought on by the covid-19 pandemic. She has been instrumental in figuring out issues that the local has had since the pandemic and we look forward to her being able to help the local undertake more forward-looking projects once the tumult of the current projects dies down.

The dedication and commitment from our executive this year as we faced tough challenges and huge amounts of work must be recognized. As does all of the work being done by our stewards, committee members, mobilization committee and members at large, this local is the sum of its members and we thank each and every one of you who have participated this year in strengthening 901! As I leave I want to welcome the new executive, I cannot see what the group coming into the local has planned for the coming year!

In solidarity,
Astrid Hobill

Vice President Community Relations' Report

Justyna Szewczyk

I understand my VP Community Relations portfolio as an invitation to be involved in various activities, which I have tried to do over the past year. I sought to work with members of the executive, rank-and-file members, and labour organizations in the Kingston community.

I started the year (May 2022) by joining the 2022 PSAC National Convention. At the Convention, I had an opportunity to learn about the issues and concerns of PSAC members in other sectors. My priority at the Convention was to vote in favor of a resolution that would secure a greater representation of DCLs (Directly Chartered Locals – like PSAC901) in the National Board of Directors. Adoption of this resolution would have allowed our Local and other DCLs to have a stronger voice within PSAC as a whole and better advocate, in our case, for the specific needs of TAs, RAs, TFs and Post-docs as academic workers. Unfortunately, the resolution did not pass.

Over the summer, I started attending PSAC Kingston Regional Women's Committee meetings. Initially, I planned to only be involved in passing resolutions prepared by PSAC 901 Equity Officer. These resolutions demanded the inclusion of non-binary members in Regional Women's Conferences, childcare at PSAC events, and menopause support, among others. As a result of discussions, the Committee held a workshop: "Gender Equity in Labour Organizing: Trans & Non-Binary Inclusion." I continue to regularly attend KRWC.

I also regularly attend Kingston & District Labour Council (KDLC) meetings. The Kingston & District Labour Council represents over forty member local unions in the Kingston region with a membership of more than 10,000 workers. The labour council is active in employment, municipal, provincial, and social issues. There, I learned about labour organizing in the area and presented updates from the academic labour sector. In October, I nominated few fellow PSAC 901 members for the KDLC Oliver Doyle Activism Award. During the Oliver Doyle Activism Award Banquet, also attended by some of our members, I had the pleasure of presenting Avi Friedlander, your Co-Chief Steward, with the Oliver Doyle Activist Rising Star Award. Congratulations, Avi!

Very recently, I got involved in plans to form an Education Committee within the KDLC. The mandate of the Committee would include labour and union education in schools and workplaces.

Similarly, I regularly attend Unity Council. Unity Council represents all unions active at Queen's. These are QUFA representing the Faculty, USW 2010 representing supporting staff and academic assistants, CUPE 254 representing technicians, CUPE 229 representing, among others, groundskeeping and custodial staff, and CUPE 1302 representing library technicians. At the Council, we inform each other about bargaining and issues with the employer. Queen's is a tough employer for all!

Throughout the Fall term, I maintained relations with various academic locals, CUPE 912 at Dalhousie University and CUPE 3906 at McMaster University, mainly offering words of support and solidarity in their struggles for better wages and working conditions. You can find the statements I prepared on our website. I joined the Wolfe Island Ferry Workers' picket and asked you to sign their petition to the provincial parliament during our Fall BBQ. You could also find me at the CUPE Education Workers' picket line in November.

In November, I needed some respite from the regular activities, so I organized in the Screening Room a showing of three short movies for the Canadian Labour Film Festival. Thanks to the expert discussion moderation skills of Mehvish M., one of our members, the event was a success. Thank you, Mehvish!

Around this time, I started conceptualizing PSAC 901 Food Support Fund. Eventually, after many discussions in the executive committee, we launched the program in January. Thanks to the support of Queen's community members, the accompanying GoFundMe campaign collected \$5000 to keep the fund going. It goes without saying that we wish there was no need for such a program.

In the spirit of getting involved as needed, I joined the work of the Staff Management Committee, which hired in September our current Office Manager. Similarly, I joined interviews of candidates for representatives to Joint Health and Safety Committees in different departments.

Since January, I have been working with other executive committee members, Political Action Committee and rank-and-file members on the campaign to abolish tuition.

Vice President Postdoctoral Scholars' Report Written by Astrid Hobill – President

This year has been an important year for postdoctoral fellows since we are coming up to a bargaining year for a new Unit 2 collective agreement. Our Vice President of Postdoctoral Affairs stepped away from his position in February before the end of his term, however before he left he was able to start to convene a committee who worked on developing the demands for the postdoctoral bargaining team who will be meeting with the employer in the next couple months. The bargaining committee work hard talking to members, developing surveys, and doing comparative analysis of other postdoctoral collective agreements across Ontario and Canada more broadly. The main areas of focus that have been identified are salary, access to healthcare, and access to childcare; other demands are also being discussed by the committee, a meeting specifically for postdoctoral fellows to vote on the demands and their importance will be set before they are presented to the employer at the bargaining table. We will need a lot of support to help reach all the Unit 2 members in order to get a fair contract with the university, there will be various different ways for postdocs to be involved and for Unit 1 members to support them, get in touch or watch our newsletters!

Beyond bargaining, coming out of covid-19, our VPPD realized that there was a lack of a strong cross-departmental postdoctoral community and worked towards creating a

more cohesive group of postdocs. There were a number of socials throughout the year, a learning group on Machine Learning, as well as the creation of a volleyball team. This successfully got many more postdoctoral fellows aware of their union and going forward this will be an important step in getting more engagement in the labour issues that the union is working towards, including upcoming bargaining. Hopefully the next VPPD will be able to continue to build on these blocks to create a vibrant Unit 2 that will be able to bargain for a great renewed contract and push forward their rights as workers.

In solidarity,
Astrid Hobill

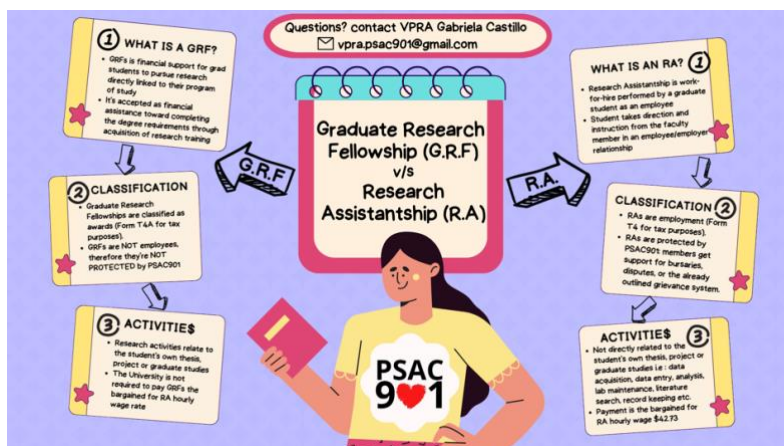
Vice President Research Assistants' Report Gabriela Castillo Raga

As Vice President Research Assistants one of my duties has been to continue collaborating in the process of grievance and arbitration regarding the misclassification of Graduate Research Assistants (RA) and Graduate Research Fellows (GRF) between the years 2015 and 2019. This process began before my appointment and it will continue after it, which means that the employer has been dragging on the arbitration process for over 2 years, and the dates are stretching as far as 2025.

Another important and rewarding task I carried on was the organization of two R.A Socials at the Grad Club, (one in Fall 2022 and one in the Winter 2023). Given the nature of the work R.As do, we are a disjointed group and we work disconnected from one another; the socials provided a place to gather and talk to other fellow R.As.

Based on the experiences that came out of the RA Socials - and as I reported back to the executive - it is my belief that a large number of GRFs are still being misclassified and underpaid, and they are performing duties that fall under the category of Research Assistants. Most of this comes from the misinformation provided to graduate student workers from their departments.

This is why the education campaign has been ongoing and it will likely have to continue: an important number of members who thought they were misclassified were able to file grievances and rectify their status.



Information Officer's Report

Brittainy Bonnis

It has been so great to see everyone back on campus this year! As the Information Officer my regular duties are primarily keeping track of the membership, staying informed about national and provincial legislative and regulatory developments relevant to the union and sending out the newsletter. As the Info Officer I have played a support role to the Executive and Committees on social media, with press releases and generally helping create content including surveys, forms, educational pieces and in organizing online and in person events. This year I also attended the Ontario Regional Women's Conference with Gabi (VPRA). Together we championed resolution demanding the inclusion of Trans and non-binary members in spaces traditional designated for women in PSAC including Women's Conferences. I have worked on a couple of grievances which are ongoing this year and am working on at least one more to be submitted soon.

I have also sat on a number of committees. I have been a working member of the Staff Management Committee and this September we hired our current Office Manager – Tracie Dixon! Tracie is 901's first full-time staff person and she and I have worked closely together since she started to make the administrative aspects of 901 run smoothly after a long period of high office staff turnover and the difficulties of remote admin during Covid. As we wrap up the annual audit it has been great to help Tracie as she develops new protocols and procedures that will serve 901 well into the future. I continued to be a member of the Health and Safety Committee and was a part of hiring several new JHSC representatives this year. I also sat on the Mental Health Committee and collaborated on the writing and launch of the new Mental Health and Hardship Bursary and have worked on the Emergency Food Support Fund. I have continued to sit on the Budget Committee. And finally, I think, I have been happy to work on the Political Action Committee this year as we continue to work for economic equity particularly for graduate student workers.

Information Officer can be a bit of a catchall job stepping in where support is needed. Often the first point of contact for members the job of keeping up with all the work of this year's Executive, Stewards and Committees has been daunting this year – 901 accomplished a lot! Covid was an isolating time for everyone. While I am impressed with how well we rallied during Covid times it has been so great to see the membership out on campus and in the community again! I look forward to seeing what is next!

Treasurer's Report

Harshavardhan Thyagarajan

It has been my pleasure to serve as the treasurer for the past year with this team. It has been a year of some major changes and radical campaigns, and I believe that the members of this executive committee leave their positions better than they came into it.

Brief overview of financials for 2022-23:

- Spending: Spending overall, and under every line item, was within budgeted amounts as planned in the AGM of April 2022 (and subsequently modified in the SGM of Oct 2022). Most expense lines (across projects and committees, business expenses, dues and affiliation fees, bursaries, travel and training) saw significant usage, with many lines being completely exhausted.
- Income: Income received was in line with expectations set out in the 2022/23 budget, including lump sum transfers for bursaries won over bargaining. Moving forward, the local has invested reserves to create income through interest, reaching maturity in a 3yr period. Additionally, income will increase through an expansion of the special levy for the staff position.
- Accounting: The local has changed accountants to improve protocols around accounting. In this, special thanks goes to our new office manager, Tracie Dixon - for carrying out the labour of improving our record keeping processes and data availability. As I write this, the local is nearly finished with the annual audit, which revealed sub-par accounting protocols in previous audits. These issues are not cause for concern around the local's health as they are all easily resolved.

Budget committee 2022-23: The budget committee was struck thrice in the past year, carrying out 2-3 meetings each time. The committee proposed major changes to the local's budget and investments prior to the fall SGM, which were all passed by membership as proposed. The committee subsequently worked on a draft budget for 2023-24, as attached for this meeting. Major items of discussion at budget committee through the year:

- Trainings budget
- Arbitration compensation
- Bursary payout models
- Bargaining campaign expenditure
- Staff position modification
- Stewards council capacity
- Rank and file campaign funds
- Social media expenditure

Draft budget 2023-24: Based on the budget committee's proposals, the following draft budget has been proposed for approval. Income for this budget has been projected through extrapolation of 2022-23 numbers. Critically, this does not include income through interest, as those funds do not reach maturity for a period of 2 more years. A noteworthy change is that this budget allows the local to carry out deficit spending, allowing expenditure for 2023-24 to exceed income for 2023-24 if necessary. Spending over income will be on the basis of reserve funds, accumulated over the past years.

Chief Stewards' and Stewards' Council Reports Avi Friedlander and Jake Morrow

Serving as Co-Chief Stewards has been a truly rewarding year and experience for both of us. We would like to start off by thanking the membership for the opportunity to engage in this work on your behalf. While personal circumstances mean neither of us can continue in these roles beyond this year, it's been a true privilege to work with the

membership, stewards council, the exec, and each other. We both knew coming into this year that we would likely be here for just one term, but wanted to do our best to grow engagement and educate members, and we feel proud of the work we've done in this regard. We cannot wait to see what the next Exec and Co-Chief Stewards have in store for the local!

Stewards' Council

Getting to work with all the Stewards and Stewards' Council regulars this year has been amazing. We feel like the Stewards' Council really fulfilled its role as a space for members of different departments to share ideas, learn together, and make decisions that shape our collective action and the direction of our local. Coming out of the strictly-zoom years, we wanted to make sure that Council could be a dynamic, welcoming, and engaging space, and we are very proud with how the year has gone.

In total there are currently 33 Stewards representing 31 departments. These departments include all faculties, however, there is a concentration of stewards within Arts and Science and an underrepresentation in Health Sciences and Engineering. This is a trend that has existed for the past few years and reaching the unrepresented departments should be a priority for next year. We are also pleased that there was strong participation at Stewards' Council from Rank-and-File members. In total (including Stewards and exec) over 55 members participated in at least one Stewards' Council meeting this year!

We also wanted to do everything in our power to maximize the experience for remote attendees at Stewards Council. While investment in even better equipment by the local may be needed to continue to improve in this area, we hope that we were able to provide a dynamic meeting experience for those unable to attend meetings in person – feedback received in this regard has been positive and/or helpful.

Continuing to have regular Stewards Council meetings through the summer could help ensure that an engaged Stewards Network (and general membership) are ready and raring to go come September!

Grievances

This year, as a local we have had over 20 grievances reach the formal grievance process and roughly the same number resolved informally with union assistance. From our understanding, this is a huge increase over past years, but we believe this likely represents an increased desire among graduate student-workers and Postdocs to act as a union and stand up for their rights rather than a sudden uptick of employer violations. These grievances covered many issues including unpaid work, unsafe lab conditions, harassment, discrimination, and the failures of the accommodations process. It was inspiring to see so many wins coming out of the grievance process, particularly in situations where the employer had been refusing to address a situation and formal grievances brought positive solutions, including numerous payments to graduate student-workers and Postdocs.

Two encouraging developments that we have seen throughout the year are 1) an increase in Stewards handling grievances and 2) departmental organizing to address workplace issues outside of the formal grievance process. We are very encouraged that this year 9 different 901 members took a lead role on at least one grievance. To get to a point

where all graduate workers' and Postdocs' rights are protected, stewards and rank-and-file members in all departments will need to be familiar with the grievance process and comfortable filing. We hope that this year has been a step in that direction and that the trend of more Stewards managing grievances will continue.

Grievances have led to great successes but they can only do so much. The majority of workplace issues Unit 1 members face is related to our work as graduate researchers – such as unsafe work conditions, inadequate funding, wage theft in the form of tuition fees, and pressure to perform unpaid labour. Unfortunately, our Collective Agreement and the grievance process only applies narrowly to our work as TAs, RAs, TFs. But this does not mean that these issues should be ignored! The biggest wins will not come through the legal grievance process but through banding together and organizing informally, and we have already started to see success with this approach. For example, many departments have been organizing to have the graduate minimum stipend increase and some have already won increases! Moving forward it will be important to be expansive on what issues we as a union are willing to address and apply this informal organizing approach to all issues regardless of whether they are covered by the formal grievance process or not.

Training and Education

A big focus for us as Co-Chief Stewards this year has been on education and training. In conjunction with the PSAC regional office, we developed and ran two Stewards' training sessions. These sessions, which trained 24 Stewards this year, prioritized grievance handling and organizing skills. We received very positive feedback from those who participated in the training and hope that next year it can be expanded to reach even more members so that everyone can be equipped with these skills to protect themselves and their coworkers. In addition to formal training we integrated collective learning activities into Stewards' Council meetings. At the start of every Council meeting we had attendees engage in small discussion-based activities and we also had a Steward present a clause of the collective agreement. The goal of these activities was to have more members aware of the protections of the collective agreement and to have folks engage in discussions about how our union local should run and act.

Final Takeaways

Seeing as neither of us will be continuing in this position next year, we want to take the opportunity in writing this report to share some lessons we have learnt over the past year.

Stewards council needs to grow - We feel that Stewards' Council this year has been a place that has allowed ideas to spread between departments and we hope to see that continue and grow into the future, but there are limits to the current Stewards' Network Structure.

Many departments are very large with 100 or more students but only one steward. With these ratios, how can stewards be in regular, meaningful contact with a majority of their members? It is impossible for stewards to know the extent of issues being faced in their department, let alone to help members address their concerns. Having multiple stewards in each department, especially in large departments, will not only reduce the expected workload on each steward but also make the Stewards Network much more

effective. We would also recommend and encourage the establishment of Post-Doctoral stewards for each Faculty.

Grievances are great but they're not enough - The large increase in grievances filed this year has been a positive development because, as mentioned, these issues are not new. That graduate workers and Postdocs are starting to feel more comfortable standing up for their rights and engaging with the union is a huge step forward for our local; as mentioned above, grievances have led to many important wins and that process can be an important tool for graduate workers and Postdocs to continue to resolve issues in the workplace.

Relying on grievances alone to protect workers' rights is a fundamentally doomed approach. To that end, in our time as Co-Chief Stewards, we have experienced two primary issues with the grievance process:

First, official grievances are only able to address issues that are explicitly protected by the Collective Agreement or specific legislations. This is an issue because the scope of the Collective Agreement is relatively narrow compared to the diverse range of issues graduate workers and Postdocs. Despite the fact that the majority of Unit 1 members (graduate student-workers) perform full time work to the benefit of the employer, the Collective Agreement exclusively addresses our work as TAs, RAs, and TFs. Additionally, the Collective Agreement is not a perfect document, it is something that was bargained for and includes compromises. We must not limit our fights to simply upholding those compromises. We must fight for all that we deserve as workers and all that is just.

Second, the University representatives are experts in making the grievance process as long and drawn out as possible, the result of which can feel discouraging and isolating for members rather than empowering. While filing grievances is important and must continue, and while many members do feel empowered by the process (and especially by wins!), even when successful the process focuses most immediately on the member as an individual rather than as part of the collective. Therefore, it is equally if not more important for members, stewards, and future exec to organize around workplace issues in ways that bring people together outside of grievances. Labour law and its processes are not designed to protect workers, they are designed to quell disruption. While they should be used they should not be relied on to bring about justice for members.

Success relies on engaging rank-and-file members - The Executive Committee plays an important role in the local. Due to being paid for our labour, we are awarded a far greater capacity to complete union work, but there are too many issues in our workplace, and they are too great for a small committee of paid executives to solve.

Moreover, Queen's administration has shown that it is far too comfortable making decisions that actively harm student-workers such as raising tuition fees, leaving funding stagnant for decades, ignoring cases of harassment and discrimination, and upholding insufficient accommodation systems. This administration does not fear Executive members because, ultimately, the administration knows it holds power in interactions with the Executive alone. What they do worry about is the thousands of graduate student-workers we represent and those workers' (you!) recognizing their value to the success of both individual departments and the university as a whole. If there is a threat that graduate

students and Postdocs will stop teaching and performing the research that allows the University to function and bring in grants and donations, or a threat that rank-and-file members will begin speaking out and telling our stories en masse, then and only then will the employer act. Fear of disruption to operations, to revenue, and to reputation is what motivates Queen's. Therefore, if we are committed to radically improving members' working conditions, the activity of the local must include and be led by many rank-and-file members across all departments.

This year, we have already seen the wins that happen when rank-and-file members take action into their own hands and organize. Multiple departments have won increases to minimum graduate student stipends and changes to the material conditions of their employment. These are wins that would never have happened if those members relied on advocacy from a small number of representatives on behalf of the entire 901 membership. Next year and in the future, all interested members should be encouraged and supported in building structures within their home department and across departments that will allow graduate workers and Postdocs to make demands of University administration and apply the type of pressures that forces the administration to listen to all your needs.

To this end, we encourage the future exec to find ways to support even more semi-autonomous rank-and-file led groups and campaigns, and to facilitate communication and collaboration between these groups. The future of the local depends on an active and engaged rank-and-file that recognizes the value it provides the University and the power it holds.

In Solidarity,
Avi Friedlander and Jake Morrow
Co-Chief Stewards 2022-23

Equity Officer's Report Prerna Subramanian

I am pleased to report on the activities of the Equity Office over the past year, where our focus was centered on the voices of migrant students. As an organization committed to social justice, we recognize that the struggles of migrant students are often compounded by systemic barriers that limit their opportunities to thrive in Canada.

Our first gathering in the fall saw us personally contacting international students on campus who were active within our social justice committees to participate in a survey. We then held an open mic event where students were given the opportunity to voice their concerns, where housing and funding precarity topped the list of concerns. In addition, we encouraged students to paint banners and sign the national petition for Migrant students United, demanding international tuition parity across Canada and a fairness agenda for migrant students at the federal level, giving them an easier pathway to permanent residency.

The Equity Office has also been actively involved in the ongoing Abolish tuition campaign, emphasizing how migrant students remain disproportionately affected because of their lesser valued lives on campus as exploited international workers. We have been

making connections with migrant student organizations outside of Queen's campus and have recently signed up to work with Migrant Students United, where we are open to involving ourselves in any national-level actions that involve fights for bettering the lives of international students.

One of the biggest wins of the Equity Office this year has been our involvement in the End the 20 campaign, where the 20-hour work limit for international students was removed. We recognize that our members have working lives outside of campus that affect their working life on campus, and both need to be taken into account in our analysis of on-campus demands in future bargaining rounds for our unit members. Moving forward, the Equity Office will continue to serve as a space for collaborations that recognize the intersectionality of our members' experiences and the struggles of migrant students. We will work to ensure that our advocacy and activism are rooted in principles of equity and justice for all.

Thank you for your continued support of our work.

Health and Safety Officer's Report **Jacqueline Giesbrecht**

This year, I have been involved in a variety of projects related to health and safety. In August, I coordinated a survey about COVID-19 and how members felt about returning to campus. I attended the PSAC Ontario Health and Safety conference in October ([details here](#)). I've chaired both the Occupational Health and Safety Committee and the Mental Health committee and have been heavily involved with the Mental Health and Hardship Bursary (see committee reports for more details). Prerna (the Equity Officer) and I met with various equity positions on campus (including from QUFA, SGPS, Arts and Science, and the Queen's Equity office) to discuss masking and other equity issues and to brainstorm ways to advocate for and support our members. I also helped support members who came forward with concerns related to workplace injuries, hazards, campus cleanliness and maintenance, discrimination, accessibility, and more.

As is often the case, we had a lot of turnover in our Joint Health and Safety reps this year, with past reps graduating or finishing their contracts at Queen's. Fortunately, we have filled most of the vacant roles – with seven new hires this year! One of these hires is for a 'new' position; for the first time in a long time, we are eligible for a position on the Family Medicine JHSC! Overall, it has been really exciting to get to know each of the reps and see their dedication for the health and safety of our members.