**PSAC Local 901 – Unit 2 - Postdocs – Queen’s University**
**Bargaining Communique #7**
**Subject:** Unacceptable Proposal from the Employer: Urgent Response Required

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On February 28th and 29th, the Union met with the Employer to continue discussions around monetary issues. While the Union hoped for a productive dialogue that would move us closer to a tentative deal, we were met instead with an appallingly low proposal that is insulting to the valuable work that postdocs do.

The Employer has proposed a minimum annual salary of $38,000, equivalent to $19.49 per hour, with yearly wage increases that would take the minimum to $39,438, or $20.22 per hour, over the course of three years.

To be clear, ***the Employer is proposing an increase of $0.73 per hour over a three-year period***. This is unacceptable, particularly given the fact that wages have been *unconstitutionally suppressed* over the past three years by bill 124. The Employer has an ethical responsibility to account for this context of unconstitutional wage suppression and to provide across-the-board increases that properly adjust for inflation.

The Employer is well aware of the hardships that members are facing. Yet, the Employer has refused to engage with the Union’s proposals around housing and relocation support, mental health and hardship funds, access to health care services, and enhancements to childcare benefits. More than a lack of respect, we feel that the Employer’s stance communicates a blatant disregard for the wellbeing of members.

We are frustrated and disappointed with the Employer’s refusal to work with us to improve the lives and working conditions of postdocs. The Employer is hiding behind the narrative of the budget deficit to evade their responsibilities to members. Postdocs are highly educated and highly skilled workers who are essential to the academic mission of this institution. To suggest that $38,000 is a significant or even a reasonable increase is shameful. Postdocs are entitled to fair compensation that recognizes the importance and complexity of the work that they do.

The Employer is currently failing to live up to the values that this institution claims to uphold. Based on what we have seen at the bargaining table, it is clear that respect and wellbeing are not equally afforded to all members of the Queen’s community. We call on the Employer to do better and to meet their obligations and commitments as leaders of this institution.

We need to mobilize as a unit to let the Employer know that their proposal is unacceptable and that we are prepared to fight for a fair deal. Sign our petition for fair compensation for postdocs, use our email signatures to show your support for postdocs on campus, send an email to the head of your department and/or to senior administration, hang up a poster supporting postdocs, and talk to other members of your department about postdoc bargaining.

As a postdoc we are also hoping that you will fill out a postcard to Patrick Deane, if you have not already done so, and we will send a physical copy to the Principal.

Please stay informed, support your bargaining team, and do not hesitate to contact us if you have questions through the bargaining mobilization coordinator, Astrid Hobill at: astridhobill@hotmail.com.

Your Bargaining Team:

Armineh Azizi, PDF at Chemical Engineering Department

Andrea Reid, PDF at School of Kinesiology & Health Studies

Shideh Ahmadi, PDF at Chemistry Department

MaryAnne Laurico, PSAC Regional Representative

Darren Pacione, PSAC Research Officer

Justyna Szewczyk-El Jassem, PSAC 901 Local President

Laneydi Martinez Alfonso, PSAC Negotiator

What is collective bargaining?

Collective bargaining empowers Postdocs to negotiate with the employer as equals to reach a legally binding contract protecting the rights of their members. As a strong, collective voice PSAC Local 901 advocates for employment security, improved working conditions, fair compensation, standardized grievance procedures, health and dental benefits and more.

The current collective agreement, which outlined the terms and conditions of employment for postdocs at Queen’s University, expired on June 30, 2023.

If you are an employee covered by the expired collective agreement and wish to be involved in the negotiation process for the new agreement, or if you have any questions or concerns regarding the collective bargaining process, please contact VP Postdoctoral Scholars: vppd.psac901@gmail.com