

March 23, 2025

Dear PSAC 901,

It's been two decades now since I began life as a graduate student – and just as long since I first signed a union card in an effort to organize teaching assistants and teaching fellows at Queen's University. At that time, we were working with CUPE. It took another 7 years and two failed union campaigns, but academic workers doing much of the heavy lifting on campus finally certified with PSAC to form local 901 in 2010. One of my highlights as a Queen's student was being a lead organizer with the TAFA (Teaching Assistants and Fellows Association) campaign in 2008.

Know that the university administration you are fighting is the same beast I remember in the early 2000s. They'll advance cuts and an austerity agenda on your backs. They'll ignore the contributions you make to the academic community, and the hard work you put in to delivering quality education to impressionable undergraduate students. They'll ask millionaire donors for money to build buildings the university can't afford - and ask you to take less. Don't give in!

Work with faculty to ensure that you are given the respect you deserve. Remind them that they have vacations and weekends off because you're leading the labs, the tutorials, and grading a stack of mid-terms so they don't have to. Remind the university that fair pay and a fair working environment improves the quality of teaching and their bottom line. Remind the campus administration that it was their poor planning and financial decisions that led Queen's into the mess it's in today.

Be strong. Don't scab. Focus on getting what is fair and what you deserve. Unions representing academics of all ranks need to be in this together!

In Solidarity!



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