

# Executive Reports

---

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT**  
ON BEHALF OF PRESIDENTS' COUNCIL  
*Cindy Oliver*

**SECRETARY-TREASURER**  
*Dileep Athaide*

**FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT**  
*George Davison*

**SECOND VICE-PRESIDENT**  
*Dominique Roelants*

**MEMBERS-AT-LARGE**  
*Terri Van Steinburg*  
*Bill McConnell*



## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

*Cindy Oliver*

# Post-Secondary Education 2.0: Connecting educators, students and communities

OVER THE LAST TWELVE MONTHS, our federation has worked to ensure that the voices and views of post-secondary educators contribute to meaningful and progressive changes in our institutions, as well as higher quality learning opportunities for our students. FPSE has also worked to protect and enhance our collective agreements in ways that improve the work-life and workplace conditions of our members. Through the ongoing work of our Labour Relations Staff Representatives, through our lobby efforts with government and through our work with allies in the community, FPSE is committed to ensuring that post-secondary education has the funding and policies needed to make access and affordability a reality in all our institutions.

In our report to this year's convention on behalf of Presidents' Council, we will detail the specific initiatives that were undertaken by FPSE during the last year. It will highlight the work done by our organization to implement the policies and priorities set by delegates at last year's convention. It will also

provide a mechanism to ensure greater accountability and transparency within our Federation.

### **Speaking out for post-secondary education**

A core value of our Federation is advocacy: advocacy for our members and their rights in the workplace; advocacy for post-secondary education and its benefits to the broader community; advocacy for our students and their access to affordable, high-quality post-secondary learning opportunities. That advocacy is articulated in our policy manual and anchors much of what we do as an organization.

In many respects, it is no coincidence that advocacy plays such a central role in the work of our Federation. Our members, after all, have enormous talent, skill and insight into the very same issues on which we focus as a Federation. Our members understand the importance that high-quality learning opportunities can make in the lives of their students. Our members understand how the viability of learning is so closely tied to proper funding from the pro-

vincial government. And our members understand how important the collegial governance of our institutions is to their success in the community.

Over the last twelve months, we have had to call upon those skills again and again to make the case for progressive funding and policy decisions from the provincial government. For example, in September we worked with all our locals to ensure that they participated in public hearings of the BC Legislature's Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services. Those hearings were held in a number of communities around the province as part of the pre-budget consultation process.

The critical aspect of these hearings is that they provide a public forum in various communities where citizens can make direct connections between fiscal priorities and public services. Too often that connection is blurred and allows politicians to ignore the demands of citizens and communities for better access to these valuable services.

The Finance Committee hearings were held in fifteen different communities this year and our locals made presentations at twelve of those hearings. In every instance, our members were able to describe the problems that their local institution is facing because funding from the provincial government has fallen so chronically short of growing needs at their institutions.

Our advocacy work on fiscal and policy issues was not confined to Legislative Standing Committees. In mid-October, our entire Presidents' Council devoted a full day to lobbying the provincial government on post-secondary issues. We met with the Minister of Advanced Education and his Deputy Minister to make the case for improvements in a number of key areas including:

- the transition to university status for the five newly-designated universities;
- the opportunity to improve the working relationship between the Industry Training Authority (ITA) and post-secondary institutions now that responsibility for the ITA has been shifted to Advanced Education;

- the importance of the Policy Table initiative that we established during our last round of bargaining and the value in continuing to use it as a mechanism for resolving system-wide issues that have an impact on employment security and institutional viability.

Our lobby efforts have also included important federal-provincial issues. For example, we continue to press the provincial and federal governments to better utilize the public post-secondary education system when it comes to delivering programs through the federal-provincial Labour Market Agreements (LMA) and Labour Market Development Agreements (LMDA). Over \$200 million of federal transfers are scheduled to flow into the provincial treasury under these agreements, and FPSE wants to ensure that our public institutions play a key role in delivering programs funded by these transfers.

### **2009 provincial budget— underfunding continues**

Although the pressure on the provincial government to improve funding for post-secondary education has always been strong, this year that pressure was even more intense. The prospect of a global economic downturn has put enormous pressures on governments of every political stripe to step forward with new fiscal measures designed to both stimulate economic growth and support those who are losing jobs as a result of the downturn.

The BC Liberals' 2009 budget failed to address both of these priorities. At a time when the public was prepared to support budget deficits, the BC Liberals did everything they could to try and avoid deficits. At a time when the public wanted to see investments in post-secondary education as part of a broader strategy to deal with the economic downturn, the BC Liberals had no plan to make those kinds of investments.

In the months leading up to the budget, Premier Campbell was loathe to admit that BC's economy was in trouble and that provincial spending was needed to counter-balance the impending slowdown. It wasn't until late January that the Premier finally conceded that his budget would run

a deficit. He resisted the idea that deficits were necessary to address a weakening economy.

What was interesting about Mr. Campbell's approach was its marked contrast to the massive deficits he accepted in 2002-2004. Back then, he accepted deficits because they financed the largest tax cuts in BC history. In 2009, deficits would be needed to finance public services, a priority that is far from uppermost in Premier Campbell's plans.

The details in the 2009 budget were discouraging for post-secondary education. What little money had been found for Advanced Education came from federal transfers (the LMA and LMDA money). The budget projected very little improvement in the operating grants for post-secondary institutions. Those grants are projected to remain flat over the next three years. Even more discouraging, the budget forecasts very little increase in student enrolments, even though we know that, as the economy slows, more adults will turn to post-secondary institutions to upgrade skills or move to new career paths.

Nowhere is that lack of support for students more obvious than in the area of tuition fees and student financial aid. Financial aid is frozen for the next three years, despite rising costs. Even more shocking, however, is the fact that this budget projects tuition fee revenues to surpass corporate tax revenues to the government within the next three years. It is a disturbing comment on how distorted the government's priorities have become over the last eight years.

### **Blueprint for Change**

Much of our advocacy work on post-secondary education issues reflects our belief that our sector can achieve much more, but only if there is leadership, proper funding, effective policies, and a coherent vision for post-secondary education. And while part of our advocacy requires us to point out what is lacking on these fronts, we also need to challenge ourselves to articulate our own vision for improving post-secondary education.

As part of our ongoing public campaign, FPSE produced a comprehensive document detailing our vision for strengthening post-secondary education in BC.

This document is called *A Blueprint for Change* and it provides both analysis and recommendations for improving our sector and supporting our students.

Our members understand that learning is a very personal experience. It involves complex relationships between students and teachers, citizens and their governments, institutions and the communities in which they operate. Our *Blueprint for Change* outlines how those relationships have changed over the last two decades. It notes how the post-secondary education system progressed through the 1990s as reflected in BC's growing post-secondary participation rate. The document also assesses how those improvements were undermined over the last eight years as funding, access and affordability all moved in the wrong direction.

FPSE believes that there must be a significant revision in the policies and funding choices made since 2001. Many of the choices made have proven to be wrong-headed. As a sensible alternative, our document calls for reforms that focus on the following seven priorities.

1. Improve funding, affordability and access by committing to real per-student funding increases in post-secondary operation budgets.
2. Strengthen BC's commitment to developmental education by creating policy and funding options that support adult learners returning to post-secondary education.
3. Expand opportunities for English Language Training (ELT) at our public institutions by ensuring that new ELT programs, services and funding target public post-secondary institutions.
4. Change BC's system of trades training and apprenticeships by reforming the Industry Training Authority (ITA) to ensure that all stakeholders, not just employers, are given a voice in the running of BC's trades training system.
5. Effectively regulate BC's private post-secondary institutions by holding private post-secondary institutions fully accountable and ensuring that they meet the high standards of BC's public institutions.



**President Cindy Oliver shows delegates to the 2008 AGM a full-page newspaper ad sponsored by FPSE and other unions in our challenge to the BC government's amendments to the *Elections BC Act*.**

---

6. Establish better policies for recruitment and retention by guaranteeing free collective bargaining in BC's public sector.
7. Make all BC post-secondary institutions leaders in technology, research and scholarly activity by ensuring all post-secondary institutions have equal access to research funding and supports.

### **FPSE's public campaign**

Over the last twelve months FPSE has engaged in a public campaign to raise awareness within the broader public on the importance of strengthening post-secondary education. The campaign has also highlighted some of the innovative work that post-secondary educators are doing in their disciplines. And finally, the campaign has devoted considerable effort to working with allies in the community and the wider labour movement to advance progressive change in our sector.

In the initial phase of the campaign, most of our efforts concentrated on changes to our website. Through improvements in the web platform, we were able to provide more up-to-date information on how post-secondary education was being hurt by chronic underfunding.

Our website improvements also allowed us to highlight some of the interesting work that our

members were doing in their institutions. Through video profiles that we posted on our website, we were able to provide local media with features on the new programs that our members had designed to meet both the demands of their students and the needs in their communities.

One of the more significant features of this year's public campaign was the renewed support for the BC Coalition for Public Education (BCCPE). Working collaboratively with the BC Teachers' Federation, CUPE BC, BCGEU, the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS), and CUFA/BC, we were able to pull together research and public input into a broad campaign that began in early January and continued into the provincial election period.

The Coalition started with the release of a public opinion poll showing strong support for improved funding of post-secondary education. Over 80% of those polled agree that deficit spending was the right policy choice for ensuring adequate education programs during uncertain economic times. Over 70% felt that high tuition fees were a barrier to post-secondary education.

The polling numbers, which helped substantiate our push to have the February 2009 budget reverse the underfunding problems in our sector, also helped mobilize a series of public forums.

Forums were organized in Prince George, Kamloops, Nanaimo, Victoria, and the Lower Mainland. They provided a mechanism for gathering public input and raising awareness in those communities on the need for change in our sector.

### **Defending our collective agreements**

One of the major functions of FPSE is not only to support the bargaining of our collective agreements, but also to work to defend those agreements during their term. Much of the work done defending those agreements is reflected in the significant amount of staff time and other resources devoted to the handling of grievances and arbitrations.

As we have noted in previous reports to our members, FPSE's budget for legal services has increased significantly over the last several years. For example, the amount spent on outside legal services has more than doubled over the last four years.

One of the main reasons why those costs have increased is because post-secondary employ-

ers have become much more litigious. It seems as though they are far more determined to spend money on challenging a grievance than settling it.

Despite the strain that this litigious approach has put on our organization, we have succeeded in strengthening many provisions in our collective agreements through the arbitration process. One of the more significant successes was an arbitration award dealing with the regularization process at Kwantlen Polytechnic University (Local 5). The decision by arbitrator Judy Korbin strengthened part of the existing provisions by concluding that the current article on regularization "has substantive meaning" and that the employer cannot ignore these provisions by filling a regularized position with a candidate it prefers over the non-regular faculty member.

Although formal arbitrations involve a significant amount of effort from our Labour Relations Staff Representatives, they also devote substantial time and effort to resolving issues outside of the formal process. For example, our Labour Relations Staff have recorded a number of positive outcomes in the area of pending layoffs at various institutions. They





**Presidents' Council and delegates pay tribute to Local 15 retiree, Lizz Lindsay, at 2008 AGM.**

---

have also worked to develop ongoing course material for Steward Training and basic grievance handling.

This informal approach to resolving labour relations problems also helps improve the labour relations climate within our institutions. By convincing employers that the litigation route will only increase their costs and not resolve the underlying problems, we believe that our Labour Relations Staff are building the foundation of mutual respect upon which a more authentic, collegial governance structure can operate and thrive.

Another important aspect of our collective agreements is our system of negotiated benefits. As is the case with other parts of our various agreements, negotiated benefit provisions require careful attention to ensure their value, relevance, and timely access for our members.

In this regard, FPSE has devoted significant effort to our College Pension Plan. In the 2007 round of bargaining we had a commitment from employers to negotiate funding improvements to our plan. Unfortunately, that commitment was largely ignored until College Pension Plan Partners became directly involved in September 2008. Over the next two months we were able to secure a commitment from employers to increase funding to the plan by 0.25% of payroll. That increase would be matched by faculty and the total would be targeted at the Inflation Adjustment Account. As well, the provincial

government committed to re-negotiating pension contributions in the 2010 round of bargaining.

Unfortunately, the funding increase was offset by a Revenue Canada ruling that effectively undermined our efforts at maintaining extended health benefits for retirees. The development highlighted the need to improve communications between Plan Partners and Plan Trustees, an improvement that we hope to advance during this year's convention.

## **Organizing**

FPSE has made a strong commitment to organizing faculty and staff who work for private post-secondary institutions. At last year's convention we reported some early success in that effort.

Part of this year's effort focused on renewing collective agreements for members who work for private post-secondary institutions. Renewing those agreements was difficult this year because a slowing economy increased the employer demands for concessions.

Despite those pressures the Local 21 Bargaining Committee held firm. With the hard work of that committee and Labour Relations Staff Representative Jeff McKeil, we were able to ensure that the first agreement was reached.

Reaching the new agreement wasn't easy. The members had to take a strike vote and press the employer with the prospect of a full blown strike in the lead-up to their final negotiations. Their resolve to get a fair deal and their solidarity as a new bargaining unit proved to be critical elements in securing their agreement. They also knew that with the full support of FPSE, they could push for the best deal possible.

The new agreement is another step forward in our organizing effort. This convention will provide another venue to discuss how our commitment to organizing can be expanded in the coming year.

## **Conferences and Learning Union@Work**

As educators, we understand the value of learning. As union activists, we understand the im-



Former Thompson Rivers University Faculty Association, (Local 2) President, Tom Friedman, ran in the May 12 provincial election in the Kamloops South Thompson riding.

---

portance of information. Through conferences and workshops, FPSE has found new ways to bring those two important ideas together.

This year we established a Labour Relations and Public Policy Advocacy Certificate to recognize the important work that our union activists do to improve their skills and knowledge in these areas. The Certificate includes a number of core courses as well as an opportunity for activists to include various “elective” offerings.

The subject areas cover issues such as Steward Training, Collective Bargaining, and Job Action. For those who want to expand their areas of interest, the Certificate also includes “Working with the Media”, “Member-to-Member Conflict”, and “Collegial Authority”.

Beyond the Certificate program, FPSE has worked to provide conferences on important and emerging issues within our sector. In the fall of 2008, we convened a conference to examine both the context and objective of coordinated bargaining in our sector. The event provided delegates with some important historical context for how bargaining structures have evolved. As well, it challenged delegates to consider how to accommodate both local and provincial priorities in a single round of

bargaining. The Bargaining Conference will help inform the process that we undertake in the fall of 2009 as we prepare for 2010 bargaining.

Another important issue for our sector has been governance. With the changes made to the *University Act* (Bill 34) and the changes in the university status at five of our locals, the issue of governance has taken on greater interest and importance.

In late February, we organized a conference to discuss how all of these trends intersect. The event heard from Doug Lorimer, Chair of CAUT’s Ad Hoc Committee on Collegial Governance. According to Lorimer, the most effective way to deal with changing governance is to have governance priorities addressed through the collective agreement. Delegates also heard from various provincial representatives who talked about the importance of having faculty representatives on governance bodies who reflect faculty priorities. Moreover, to ensure those priorities are given full voice, the faculty association needs to maintain an ongoing dialogue with those representatives.

### **Standing Committees**

FPSE’s Standing Committees provide important information, research, and advice to Presidents’ Council on a wide range of important issues. That advice,

in turn, helps inform the Council's decision-making process, a process for which they are ultimately responsible.

A number of committees have taken the initiative to advance new campaign ideas in their area. For example, the Status of Women Committee developed and implemented a "Pink Slip" campaign to raise awareness amongst FPSE members and the voting public on the damage that Gordon Campbell has done to the conditions that women face in BC. The campaign details, through postcards, the top ten reasons why Premier Campbell should be given the "pink slip" on May 12th. The Non-Regular Faculty Committee continues to push its campaign to have secondary scales eliminated in the next round of bargaining. That campaign has the full support of Presidents' Council, as well as a budget of \$10,000 to make the campaign effective.

Other committees, including the Human Rights & International Solidarity Committee, the Education Policy Committee, the Workplace Health, Safety & Environment Committee, and the Disability Management & Rehabilitation Committee are all committed to advancing policies and actions that make a difference.

In a few instances, such as the HRISC, they have dedicated funding to help address specific priorities of our Federation. For all of them, the focus is to provide advice and recommendations to Presidents' Council that will help strengthen our decision-making process and ensure activists are fully engaged in our union.

### **Working with provincial allies**

Our work with education sector allies has played a critical role in our advocacy agenda over the last twelve months. Those efforts have focused on public awareness campaigns as well as specific proposals for education policy and funding reform.

The most significant commitment has been our work to renew the activities of the Coalition for Public Education. That undertaking was formalized in November when we met with education unions and student organizations to agree on a common strategy to advance education issues over the next six to twelve months.

The work of the Coalition has been summarized earlier in this report, but it is important to em-





Delegates to the 2008 AGM offered support to President of Nicola Valley Institute of Technology Employees' Association, Sharon McIvor, in her important legal victory in the BC Supreme Court. The decision struck down part of Ottawa's definition of a status Indian and opened the door to new applications for native services.

---

phasize that, through Coalition activity, FPSE is able to make new connections within the community. Those connections, in turn, help support our larger objective of lobbying government to better support and fund post-secondary education.

FPSE also worked closely with a number of unions to challenge the BC government's amendments to the *Elections BC Act*. Those amendments have been referred to as the Gag Law because they placed severe restrictions on the ability of third-party organizations to advertise prior to the start of the provincial election. Those restrictions were punitive, in our view, and along with the BCTF, the BC Nurses' Union and CUPE BC, we challenged the legislation.

Although the court process was expedited, the ruling was not made until late March. As a result, the Gag Law did have an impact during the period from mid-February until the ruling was delivered. The court victory sent a strong message to the Campbell government that, once again, their heavy-handed legislative measures cannot trump basic rights guaranteed under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

An important provincial ally for post-secondary educators is the BC Federation of Labour. Since joining the BCFL in 1995, we have worked to broaden our representation within that organization and actively

participated in their campaigns. Front and centre in that effort has been our support for the Count Me In political action campaign, in which the BCFL has worked to help all its affiliate "talk up" critical ballot box issues with union households. That campaign has targeted its resources at the provincial election.

Although this report was written prior to the provincial election, we know that no matter what the results of that election, our work to lobby government will only intensify after May 12th. A new government will most certainly look to revise post-secondary education policy. Our challenge will be to ensure that any proposed changes move our sector towards the goals of better access and greater affordability.

### **Working with national and international allies**

On the national scene, FPSE maintains strong and active support for the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT), and the National Union of CAUT (NUCAUT). All three organizations have played a central role in holding the federal government accountable on important social, economic and post-secondary issues.

Without question, the political crisis precipitated

by Prime Minister Harper's reckless disregard for both the House of Commons and for the growing economic crisis in Canada dominated the federal scene over the last twelve months. That recklessness culminated in a political crisis in early December, a crisis that has left troubling divisions within Canada and seriously undermined a meaningful fiscal response by the federal government to the recession.

Having ignored the obvious economic crisis when it tabled a Fiscal Update in late November, the Harper government faced a confidence vote and the prospect of losing power. The CLC played a major role in mobilizing both the Opposition parties and the broader labour movement to support a coalition government. That mobilization effort forced the Harper government to retreat from its original "do nothing" approach and instead table a more substantive budget in late January. The January budget still fell well short of making a meaningful commitment to economic stimulus, but the forced retreat from its Fiscal Update has been a major political setback for the Harper Tories, one that continues to haunt them today.

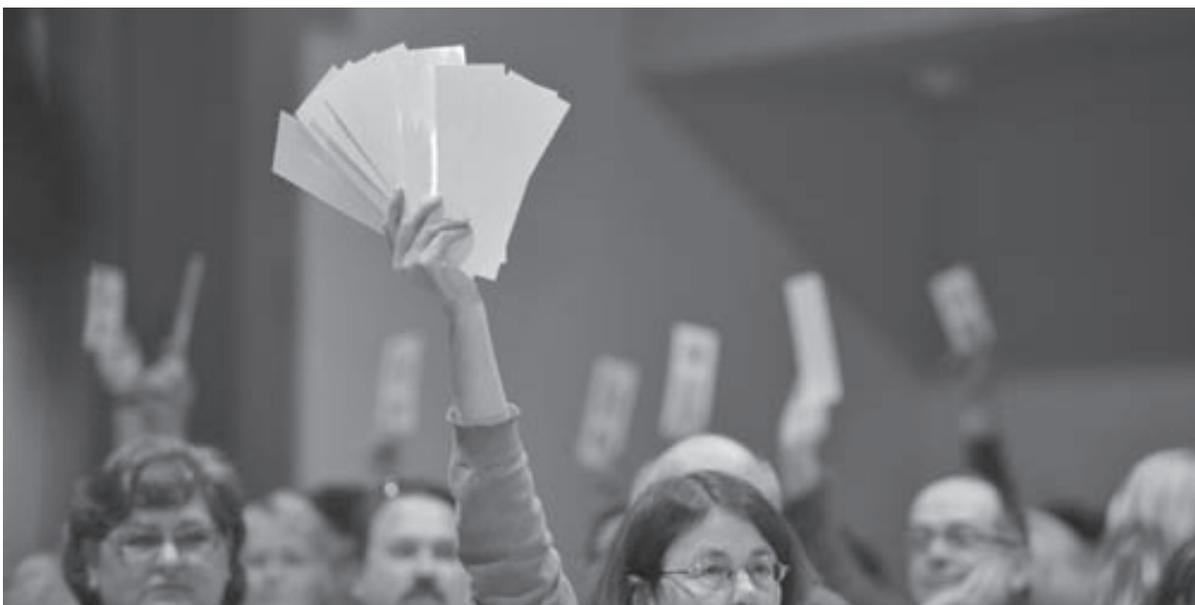
FPSE has also worked closely with CAUT to expose the problems embedded in the Harper government's approach to post-secondary funding. In marked contrast to the way in which the Obama administration has approached the funding of

post-secondary research, the Harper government has opted to undercut research funding support at Canada's post-secondary institutions. CAUT's public campaign against the federal government's approach has not only garnered national media interest, it continues to increase pressure on the Harper government to change its policies.

CAUT has also provided FPSE with support and research as our locals make the transition to university status. In the fall, for example, we brought CAUT's Executive Director Jim Turk to BC to meet with the five locals to talk about that transition. His advice focused on the importance of collective bargaining and collective agreements in that transition. Similarly, our inclusion of CAUT's Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Collegial Governance, Doug Lorimer, as a keynote speaker at our February Conference on Collegial Governance is another example of how our membership in CAUT benefits our locals.

Part of our work on national issues includes our involvement in the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum (CAF), an organization that brings together Directors of Apprenticeship from across Canada, as well as representatives from post-secondary education in trades training. As co-chair of CAF, I have been able to stress the importance of public post-secondary institutions in the delivery of these programs.

CAF has undertaken valuable research work. It



has added to the ground-breaking report it did on the “investment returns” associated with apprenticeship training programs. The research helps to document the direct benefits to an employer when they invest in apprenticeships and trades training. CAF is also promoting a new program designed to increase public sector employer engagement in apprenticeships. Unfortunately, the public sector currently does not demonstrate the kind of commitment to apprenticeships that you would expect. These CAF initiatives will help advance our priorities for trades training and apprenticeships.

On the international front, FPSE continues to focus on a number of key priorities including our support for contingent academic workers and our commitment to international solidarity and human rights. In August, FPSE sent a delegation to the COCAL Conference in San Diego. The event brought together educators from Canada, the United States, and Central America. FPSE has also increased its support and commitment to international solidarity through our newly established International Solidarity Fund which supports a number of international development initiatives.

### **Special remembrance**

Over the last twelve months, we have mourned the passing of a number of activists within our ranks. In March Patti Barnes, Head Librarian and long-time activist at Northwest Community College, passed away. Patti’s commitment to her community and her work within the local reflected her deep commitment to post-secondary education. She will be dearly missed by family, friends, colleagues, and community.

### **Thanks**

The success of our Federation reflects the commitment and input of our members in a democratic decision-making process. I am honoured to represent this organization and be a part of that process. As part of my report to this year’s convention I want to acknowledge and thank those who contribute to the success of our organization.

FPSE benefits enormously from the talent and skill of our staff who work to ensure that the pri-

orities we identify at AGMs, at our Presidents’ Council and in our Standing Committees are translated into action. The Staff Representatives who work on the labour relations front – Zoe Towle, Lesley Burke-O’Flynn, Jeff McKeil, David Piasta, and Weldon Cowan – and Policy & Communications Staff Representative Phillip Legg are dedicated to meeting the needs of our members.

Administrative Assistants – Nancy Yip, Margaret Sutherland, Mary Bruegeman, Angela Kenyon and Gisele da Silva – provide effective support to staff, committees and Presidents’ Council, and they manage these responsibilities under demanding timelines as well. Our Financial Assistant, Mat Toma, keeps our financial affairs in top shape.

Presidents’ Council works tirelessly to keep the organization current and effective between AGMs. I want to thank members of the Council (their names are listed at the end of this report) for their dedication and support.

Our Executive Council has played a critical role in the ongoing work of FPSE. Their advice, input, and participation in the work of Standing Committees, the issues before Presidents’ Council, and a wide range of external commitments ensures that our Federation is an effective voice for our members. My thanks go out to Vice-Presidents George Davison and Dominique Roelants, and to Members-at-Large Terri Van Steinburg and Bill McConnell. They have all made enormous contributions to our Federation. Our Secretary-Treasurer Dileep Athaide has also been a tremendous source of advice and support. His insights and dedication have made our Federation just that much more effective.

And finally, I want to thank the members whose support and activism is our core strength. Your commitment makes our Federation work and makes it possible for FPSE to be an effective advocate for post-secondary education.

Respectfully submitted and in solidarity,

Cindy Oliver, President  
on behalf of Presidents’ Council

# FPSE 2008-2009 LOCAL PRESIDENTS

## **John Wilson**

Local 01: Capilano University Faculty Association

## **Donna Petri**

Local 02: Thompson Rivers University Faculty Association

## **George Davison**

Local 03: Faculty Association of the College of New Caledonia

## **Susan Briggs**

Local 04: Douglas College Faculty Association

## **Terri Van Steinburg**

Local 05: Kwantlen Faculty Association

## **Kathy Bonell**

Local 06: College of the Rockies Faculty Association

## **Rhonda Snow**

Local 07: University of the Fraser Valley Faculty & Staff Association

## **Dan McDonald**

Local 08: Vancouver Island University Faculty Association

## **Doug Henderson**

Local 10: Selkirk College Faculty Association

## **Sheree Ronaasen**

Local 11: Academic Workers' Union (NWCC)

## **Darryl Ainsley**

Local 12: Camosun College Faculty Association

## **Lynn Carter**

Local 14: Langara Faculty Association

## **Frank Cosco**

Local 15: Vancouver Community College Faculty Association

## **Bill McConnell**

Local 16: North Island College Faculty Association

## **June Williams**

Local 17: Thompson Rivers University Open Learning Faculty Association

## **Sharon McIvor**

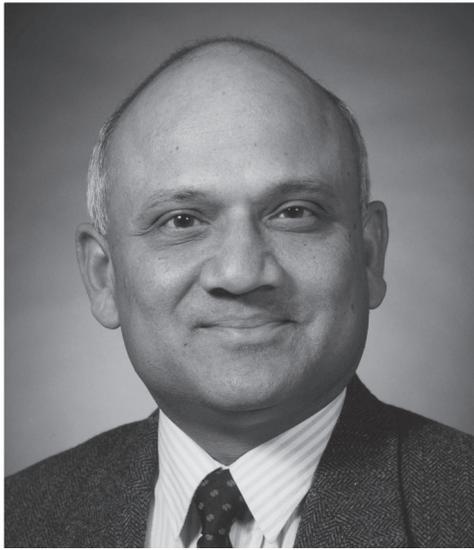
Local 19: Nicola Valley Institute of Technology Employees' Association

## **Bari Blackhart**

Local 21: Private Sector Faculty & Staff Association

## **Tom Becher**

Local 22: Emily Carr University of Art & Design Faculty Association



## SECRETARY-TREASURER'S REPORT

*Dileep Athaide*

# Funding our work in difficult economic times

**THE COMPLEX PORTFOLIO OF** the Secretary-Treasurer at FPSE includes responsibilities as the Federation's chief financial officer; personnel, office and events manager; primary back-up to the President on all political issues and policy implementation; member and recording secretary of the Executive Committee and Presidents' Council; and a myriad of internal and external committee work and representations.

At four regular intervals through the year, I present a Secretary-Treasurer's report to Presidents' Council, with a greater level of detail on my activities than provided here. This AGM report focuses on the 2008-09 year-end finances (accompanied by our Auditor's Report), on our proposed budgets for 2009-10, and on my other non-fiscal activities carried out on behalf of the Federation. I have refrained from providing opinion and discussion on issues, but would be most happy to exchange such with members at our AGM-Convention.

### **FPSE's 2008-09 fiscal year-end**

As the accompanying financial statements indicate, our 2008 AGM approved an operating budget for the

April 1, 2008 to March 31, 2009 fiscal period with total net revenues estimated at \$ 2,737,049, and total net expenditures of \$ 2,832,889, for a projected deficit of \$ 95,840. Additional expenses subsequently approved by AGM and Presidents' Council effectively increased the projected deficit to \$ 137,340. At year-end, our actual net operating revenues were a touch higher at \$ 2,813,657 and actual net expenditures came in at \$3,024,019. This resulted in a net operating deficit of \$ 109,639 after taking into account transfers from the Defence Fund for operating purposes totaling \$ 104,323. Our Operating Fund, which represents the current value of the Operating Reserve Fund and the cumulative result of operating surpluses and deficits over the years, now stands at \$ 201,935.

A closer examination of revenues reveals that our investment income from our Operating Reserve Fund was considerably less than our budget projection; however, given the collapse in the financial markets, we were fortunate not to have recorded a loss. On the expenditures side, Presidents' Council meetings and the annual orientation-retreat cost more than anticipated, as did attendance by members at confer-

ences. Additionally, FPSE participation in the triennial CLC convention resulted in total costs of \$ 44,907. These increased expenditures reflect a combination of generally higher travel, accommodation and meal costs, as well as greater levels of participation by our members at these events.

By far the single highest expenditure in excess of our estimated amount was in legal fees: \$ 200,000 budgeted, \$ 280,367 spent. This large amount reflects the high number of grievances taken to arbitration by FPSE, in response to requests from Locals, which required external legal counsel, and an exceptionally high number of legal opinions sought in regard to political decisions, bargaining and contract administration.

With regard to capital expenditures, FPSE budgeted \$ 7,000 and we spent \$ 15,824, the excess resulting from the installation of a required upgraded automatic door lock and keyless entry system for the FPSE office, and the capitalization of system software upgrades for our network servers.

A resolution at AGM authorized a transfer from the Defence Fund to cover legal expenditures in excess of \$ 200,000 for the 2008-09 fiscal year. Since total legal expenditures were \$ 280,367 at year end, this resulted in an \$ 80,367 transfer. A separate resolution at our October 2008 Provincial Council

approved the expenditure of \$ 25,000 from our Defence Fund for our 2008-09 political action campaign; at fiscal year-end,

\$ 23,956 had been spent for this purpose. Taking into account Defence Fund transfers for these expenditures on excess legal costs and the political action campaign, combined with the almost unprecedented decline in global financial markets in late 2008, our Defence Fund valuation at year-end stands at a still healthy \$ 6,290,953.

I may also add here that through the course of the past year I met often with representatives of Blackmont Capital, our investment brokerage firm, to discuss the nature and direction of their investment strategies and performance, and corresponding reporting practices to FPSE. These meetings afforded the relaying of advice received from our executive and PC with regard to our investment at Blackmont.

### **FPSE's 2009-10 proposed budgets**

Our annual budgets are prepared following careful examination and analysis of previous budgets and year-end reports, coupled with projected changes in our Federation's expected revenues and planned activities/expenditures for the coming year. This year, FPSE's President and Finance Committee helped



Secretary-Treasurer Dileep Athaide consults with FPSE Financial Assistant Matt Toma during budget discussions at 2008 AGM.

prepare an initial budget which was then modified and approved by the Executive Committee and Presidents' Council at their early-March meetings.

In our operating budget, we have projected a total %9.3 increase in membership dues, due to a projected increase in salaries by %2.1, a proposed increase in dues of %5.9, and a

%1.3 increase due to inclusion of Camosun College Faculty Association (Local 12) as a full member of the FPSE for the 2009-2010 fiscal year. Following the approximately 10% transfer to our Defence Fund, and the addition of estimated investment income, our total net revenue is expected to be \$2,982,880.

Our operating expenses reflect collective agreement mandated increases in officers' and staff compensation, and increased anticipated expenditures for legal costs, the 2009 AGM, provincial bargaining and member attended conferences. Planned expenditures on FPSE committees, advocacy and public relations, and affiliations and representations have been maintained from the 2008-09 budget, while planned administration expenditures are lowered slightly, primarily due to a decrease in planned amortization charges from full amortization of existing capital assets, slightly offset by a small rent increase for office space. Total net expenditures are expected to be \$ 2,968,350.

We therefore present an operating budget with an overall projected surplus of \$ 14,580. Of course, I would be much surprised if the line-by-line budget discussion at our AGM leaves this figure unchanged.

On the capital side, we project a very modest budget for 2009-10, with expenses totaling a mere \$ 12,000. This projection anticipates no major computer system replacement costs in this coming year.

### **Office and personnel management**

FPSE has a complement of twelve office staff who serve our members very well. For the first time in several years there were no changes in personnel, providing much-appreciated office support stability.

Through the year I worked most closely with, and received excellent support from, our Financial Assistant Matt Toma and Administrative Assistant Gisele

da Silva. Likewise, Administrative Assistant Angela Kenyon continues to provide liaison with Raj Taneja of SSID Inc. and ensures the continuous smooth operating of all our Federation's computer systems. We installed a new door-locking system for our office, to aid in better compliance with PIPA requirements and to address concerns regarding general security.

I continue to liaise with the BCTF, our landlord, on various building related matters. We suffered through another year of major traffic disruptions due to the nearby sky-train tunneling operations. We continue to be very pleased with our FPSE office location and look forward to the proximity of a sky-train station facilitating quick travel directly from/to the airport beginning this Fall.

### **FPSE events, committees and member services**

I oversee the logistical arrangements for all FPSE events. This of course includes all the preparations for our 2009 AGM and Convention here in Victoria: contracts with The Inn at Laurel Point; meals, accommodation, and delegate travel; and liaising with our Local 12 host, the Camosun College Faculty Association. Incidentally, after exploring several Lower Mainland options, a contract was negotiated to hold our 2010 AGM and Convention at Harrison Hot Springs; this same venue hosted our June 2009 Presidents' Council Retreat.

Angela Kenyon and I worked closely with the Coast Plaza on Denman where our out-of-town Standing Committee members stay while attending meetings in Vancouver, and also the venue of our Joint-Committees Conference in mid-February; with the Vancouver Hilton Metrotown which was where we held our Spring 2009 Conference on Institutional Governance; and the Delta Airport Inn in Richmond, venue for our Fall 2008 Bargaining Forum. Reports back from members indicate their overwhelming satisfaction with the arrangements for all these events.

Much time and effort goes into the preparations for, reporting to, and the recording of proceedings of our roughly tri-monthly Executive Committee and Presidents' Council meetings. Once again, last October's



PC meeting was held in Victoria and combined with a somewhat disappointing (because of poor availability of officials) lobby of Government and Opposition MLAs on post-secondary education issues in BC.

I continued to serve as Executive Liaison to the Contract Administration Review Committee (CARC). This FPSE Standing Committee was very ably chaired by Shirley Ackland (Local 16) and staffed by David Piasta. My Secretary-Treasurer duties include the chairing of our Grievance Arbitration Review Committee (GARC), comprising our much-experienced complement of five labour relations Staff Representatives and our CARC Chair. For a second consecutive year, GARC considered a very high number of requests from locals for support in taking grievances to arbitration. The great majority of these requests are upheld, and in turn a good majority of the cases are resolved in our favour, many at a pre-arbitration hearing stage. A significant number of cases continue to require the assistance of external legal counsel, expertly given, and at a very high cost, but clearly one of the most significant privileges of FPSE membership to the affected locals. Last September, Cindy and I met with Leo McGrady to explore possible ways by which we could limit our external legal coun-

sel expenses without compromising this important and necessary service.

All through 2008-09, I spent considerable time and effort on College Pension Plan issues, representing FPSE at Plan Partner meetings, and participating in very many “emergency” Executive and PC teleconference meetings, as well as a brief appearance at our Pension Advisory Committee’s Spring 2009 meeting.

At our 2008 AGM, members narrowly rejected a motion to double the value of our FPSE International Solidarity Fund, which lends our support to human rights and social justice causes in the developing world. I had the privilege of once again chairing the ISF Committee and commend the work of the committee members, Rick Gordon (Local 14) and Mice Albano (local 12) from our HR&ISC and PC’s Terri Van Steinberg (Local 5) and Tom Becker (Local 22). Our 2009 Call for Proposals received a total of thirteen applications, and at the time of this writing the ISF Committee had not selected the successful recipients of IS funding. Incidentally, the total amount requested by these very commendable proposals was in excess of three times the \$15,000 annual allotment of the Fund.

I very much appreciate invitations to locals, to participate at AGMs and other events and meetings. I was privileged to accompany CAUT Executive Director Jim Turk on his visits to the Faculty Associations at our new universities to discuss the potential dangers and unique opportunities facing faculty as a result of the new institutional status. This year I managed to visit Locals 1, 4, 5, 7, 12, 15, 19 and 22.

### **BCFL, CAUT, NUCAUT and CLC**

An overwhelming majority of our members appreciate the value of our affiliation with the BC Federation of Labour (BCFL), the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT), and the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) through the National Union of the Canadian Association of University Teachers (NUCAUT). We receive significant benefits from, and make important contributions to, these organizations, and I summarize some of my own involvement here.

I have been an active member of the BCFL Executive Council, participating in meetings through the year, as well as the annual strategic planning session

on mainly political issues with the affiliate ranking officers at Harrison Hot Springs. Until last Fall I served as the FPSE representative on the BCFL Education Committee. I am a member of the Federation's Climate Change Working Group, through which I also now serve on the Labour Climate Action Working Group which was established by the Provincial Government's Climate Action Secretariat to provide input with respect to the Western Climate Initiative recommendations.

I continue to chair the BCFL Human Rights Committee, and as such presented the committee's report and recommendations at the November 2008 Convention. FPSE had a large contingent of forty-five delegates at this BCFL Policy Convention, and our members contributed significantly on many fronts. Many joined me at the annual Union Counselling Breakfast, but few attended the International Solidarity Night where I had the privilege of chairing the evening session on Human Trafficking in Western Europe and the plight of Migrant Temporary Foreign Workers here in BC..

I was an active participant at CAUT Council's Fall 2008 and Spring 2009 meetings in Ottawa. Many



of our members are privileged to attend valuable workshops and conferences hosted by CAUT through the year. I myself was an active participant in CAUT's Equity Forum "Recasting Equity" in Toronto in March. Along with a few other FPSE members and staff, I attended the annual Western Regional Faculty Associations Conference hosted by the SFUFA in Vancouver in October '08.

The NUCAUT and CLC Conventions were held in Toronto last May, and FPSE was represented by a 15-member delegation. I presented a report at NUCAUT as Member-at-Large on the National Executive Board, and as NUCAUT representative on the CLC Training and Technology Committee, for the previous three years. With much motivation and unbridled support from our FPSE delegation, I was elected President of NUCAUT and also elected to the Executive Council (Vice-President) of the CLC for a three-year term (no remuneration or release-time, just more work and responsibility!).

I participated at CLC Executive Council meetings in Ottawa in October 2008 and February 2009. Council was very busy from late November through the end of January with developments in Parliament and our support for a potential Coalition government, and more importantly an insistence on a timely, just and worker-supportive Federal Government response to the unfolding of the global economic crisis.

The CLC Winter Labour School at Harrison Hot Springs in January-February 2009 was attended by several FPSE members and staff, in both learning and teaching capacities. I myself taught Union Counselling II (on implementing U-C programs in Unions/workplaces) and I continue to promote some form of union counselling at many/all of our FPSE locals. Last June, I assisted with an all-day Union Counselling Strategic Planning exercise coordinated by Ronnie Skolnick at KFA (Local 5).

### **Other external events and representations**

As an officer of FPSE, I am invited to participate and contribute to many organizations and events in the broader educational and labour

spheres. I briefly list some of these activities in which I have been involved over the past year.

I once again co-chaired the 2008 (and now also 2009) Campaign Labour Committee of the United Way of the Lower Mainland. This volunteer work involves very many meetings all through the year, and includes a seat at the Campaign Cabinet which is the body that oversees the raising of funds to improve lives and strengthen communities throughout the region. Labour is proud of its strong partnership with the United Way, whose priority is to work with community partners to improve the lives of children and seniors, also supporting immigrants and people challenged by poverty, mental illness and homelessness. I was also elected to serve as a member of the Board of Directors of the UWLM. I must also mention here that our FPSE Office along with Local 5 (KFA) were the proud recipients of the Labour Spirit Award at the annual Scotia McLeod/UWLM Community Spirit Awards Breakfast on February 26<sup>th</sup>.

FPSE members and staff joined me at the CCPA Annual Fundraising Dinner in February, which featured Maher Arar speaking on "Fragile Rights: The Erosion of our Human Rights and Civil Liberties in the name of National Security" Incidentally, last September I was present at the CCPA's release of their study (co-sponsored by the UWLM) on a Livable Wage for residents of Greater Vancouver and Victoria; the approximately \$16.50/hr lends strong support to Labour's lobby for an immediate increase in the province's minimum wage to \$10/hr.

I continue my work as Vice-President of the CPEN (Charter for Public Education Network) Society, defending and promoting public education at the K-12, post-secondary and community levels. The Coalition for Public Education in BC was reactivated this year and I represented FPSE at many meetings and activities of this Coalition which has played an important role in educating the general public on education issues leading up to the May Provincial Election. Last August I was panel presenter, on the impacts of post-secondary budget cuts, at the semi-annual CFS AGM in Victoria.

In my role as ISF Chair, and on-going provider of



**Darryl Ainsley, President of FPSE Local 12, speaks to delegates at our last AGM.**

external liaison on human rights and international solidarity issues, I corresponded and met with many individuals and organizations. These included Co-Development Canada with whom we have been discussing the possibility of a custom-arranged FPSE members' study tour to Central America, and follow-up with our ISF award recipients on projects supported by FPSE abroad. Last September I attended Co-Dev Canada's AGM where we received an inspiring presentation by George Heyman and CUPE National President Paul Moist on their labour solidarity tour of Colombia. Canada has disgracefully signed a "free"-trade agreement with Colombia, under pressure from the U.S. who ironically has chosen not (yet) to do so itself due to the gross human rights violations in that country!

I was a solidarity guest at the BCGEU's Convention in Vancouver last June, and along with Cindy have met several times with the GEU's new President Darryl Walker regarding issues and concerns of mutual

interest. I likewise represented FPSE at the HEU Convention last Fall where long-time President Fred Muzin was succeeded by Ken Robinson. In February I attended a CUPE (and United Steelworkers) luncheon and public forum on "Investing in our Communities: Local Solutions from B.C. Municipalities".

### **In Closing**

It has been an honour to have served FPSE in the role of Secretary-Treasurer for seven years and I look forward to assisting my successor in any way I can over the next year, as I "transition" back to my appointment at Capilano University (Local 1). I've enjoyed the opportunity to work with some wonderful colleagues, both members and staff, for which I express my gratitude. President Cindy Oliver and I have worked very closely together as a tandem, providing mutual support and strong friendship, and I salute her leadership at FPSE's helm. Vice-Presidents George Davison and Dominique Roelants and Members-at-Large Terri Van Steinburg and Bill McConnell round out our 2008-09 Executive team whose skills and support I have much admired and appreciated.

I express my gratitude to all members of Presidents' Council (from which I'm stepping down after eleven consecutive years!), and to the Chairs and all members of our ten Standing Committees who volunteer their skills and precious time to improve the well-being of their co-workers as well as for so many broader labour and social justice causes.

FPSE is fortunate to have an extremely talented and hard-working staff, with whom I have the pleasure to work on a daily basis. I extend special thanks to our Financial Assistant Matt Toma, and sincere gratitude to our Administrative Assistants Gisele, Mary, Nancy, Angela and Margaret, and our Staff Reps Phillip, David, Lesley, Weldon, Jeff and Zoe, for their continued dedication and support. Lastly, my thanks to all our individual members for the opportunity you have given me to serve you at FPSE.

Respectfully submitted,

Dileep Athaide,  
Secretary-Treasurer

## FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT'S REPORT

### *George Davison*



THIS IS THE END OF MY FIFTH TERM AS FPSE's First Vice President and my twelfth on Presidents' Council. I have come to understand more fully the difficulties we all face in light of some constants and some change: we are even more differentiated now that we have seven university faculty associations in our midst, but all of us face the struggles created by underfunding and an increasing managerial model.

When Dileep Athaide announced his retirement last year, I said I would let my name stand for election as Secretary-Treasurer of FPSE. However, I'll leave the campaign for May and simply report on this past year's activities. Highlights included the Canadian Labour Congress Convention in Toronto last May and the Coalition of Contingent Academic Labour Convention in San Diego in early August. Low points included the ongoing pension plan problems and the constant struggles in our system, in particular at CNC, to keep our institutions comprehensive and adequately funded.

In addition to the regular meetings of the Executive and Presidents' Council (last June's orientation meeting at Harrison, September, October in Victoria, January and March meetings), our two year long Sub-Committee on Archiving/Updating the FPSE Policy Manual – Frank Cosco, Susan Briggs and I – reported in January and the result is part of this year's AGM package. Our original intention of completely rearranging the policies, and incorporating position descriptions and Standing Committees, was scaled back considerably, but the book will be more

readable and better organized. Thanks to Frank and Susan for all their work.

I again presented to the Standing Committee on Finance in September in Prince George, and attended the lobby meeting with Minister Coell and Deputy Minister Ciceri in October in Victoria. In the wake of last year's 2.6% cuts to post-secondary institutions, the Minister seemed to earn a promotion with the added responsibilities of Labour Market Development, PSEC, and the return of the Industry Training Authority.

Aside from some pre-election allocations to avoid unseemly program cuts, and lots of capital announcements, we've seen little leadership from the Ministry. A good example of this is the Policy Table: the last full meeting was on June 11; the Auditor General's report on the ITA wasn't yet out (and has not yet been discussed), and we moved on to a discussion about system collaboration, or the lack of it.

A sub-committee was struck, with Stu Seifert of BCGEU and I representing the unions, Nick Rubidge (COR), John Birnie (NLC), Dennis Silvestrone (VIU), and Ken Takagaki (BCIT) representing institutions, and several Ministry directors. We've had two teleconferences (on January 8 and March 9) which have been mildly useful in listing barriers to collaboration (funding and counting mechanisms), and what collaboration used to look like (C2T2, CEISS, CTMS, etc) but this sub-committee work has

basically replaced the main table, which was never our intent (quarterly meetings to address system problems for the life of the Common Agreement). Nothing will happen now until after the May 12 election.

The Joint Committee on Benefits Administration met on February 27 to continue the reviews set up under LOUs 7 and 11. Staff Rep David Piasta and I, John Turner (NLC), and Jaci White (BCGEU Benefits rep) met with PSEA, who brought along Mercer's Eileen Beadle on the STD/LTD usage rates and concerns. We agreed that a session on Pharmacare's drug formulary would be useful, but so far no meeting has been set. Once we have all the information, then our task will be to examine what we might want to do with the benefits review.

The Joint Administration and Dispute Resolution Committee met on April 17 for the first time in over a year. We finally addressed the employers' proposed draft interpretation bulletins on partial disability benefits and a harassment complaint timeline of 6 months. Other agenda items were revisions to the Common Disability Plan, layoff notice while on disability, and who gets to decide whether language is superior or not. CEO John Waters naturally argued that employers act and unions grieve. He also announced that his replacement as Director of Labour Relations, Anita Bleick, currently negotiator with the GVRD, starts on May 25 and would be the employer chair at our next meeting in the fall.

I am the Executive liaison for two Standing Committees – Disability Management & Rehabilitation and Non-Regular Faculty. I attended both the fall and spring meetings. The former committee has many new faces to help our most vulnerable members work through institutional bureaucracy. The latter had a great campaign: the green apple with a bite out and "Two pay scales + same work = unfair" sums up non-regs' conditions very well. Thanks to both outgoing committee Chairs, Lil McPhail (Local 6) and Debbie Hlady (Local

12), and incoming Chairs, Anne-Marie Davison (Local 5) and Teressa Fedorak (Local 2), along with Staff Reps David Piasta and Weldon Cowan.

Other meetings included CAUT's Contract Academic Staff Committee meeting last August, and the CAUT Council meeting at the end of November, where several of our pro-rata proposals were approved. Thanks to Cindy Oliver for her work as committee Chair steering non-regular issues through the maze of CAUT policy development. The CAS Committee's biennial conference is in Ottawa at the end of May, and I am facilitating and presenting in a couple of the workshops.

I also attended last December's Lancaster Public Sector Bargaining Conference, the meeting with Presidents and bargainers of the New Universities (with TRU), the Spring Conference, and late February's Governance Conference. The last three are excellent examples of sharing information, building skills, and developing strategies to advance our issues. And I helped organize the Coalition for Public Education Forum held in Prince George on March 3.

Finally, thanks to fellow Presidents and Executive members Cindy Oliver, Dileep Athaide, Dominique Roelants, Bill McConnell, and Terri Van Steinburg. Though we have had our differences, may we pull together for the best interests of our members and the Federation, and concentrate our efforts on combating the agendas of employers and governments who are not looking to do us any favours or cut us any slack. Their interests are served if we are divided; ours are served by finding creative solutions that solve our problems while maximizing our strength.

Respectfully submitted,

George Davison,  
First Vice-President

## SECOND VICE-PRESIDENT'S REPORT

### *Dominique Roelants*



THIS HAS BEEN A DIFFICULT YEAR. IN MY various provincial roles, I have been called upon to make some very tough decisions, ones that I have made on the basis of the legal and fiduciary constraints imposed upon me. As always, I made what I believe to be the most appropriate decision regardless of whether it might further any career aspirations I might have.

#### **Pension Board**

As you all know, the College Pension Board made several controversial decisions this past year. Over the past seven years I and other FPSE appointed College Pension Board Trustees have been warning that we do not have sufficient funds going into the Inflation Adjustment Account of the College Pension Plan. In 2003, the following policy was passed at the FPSE AGM:

*FPSE supports a funding policy for the Inflation Adjustment Account (IAA) that would establish a 15-year time horizon for indexing levels at each College Pension Plan valuation. (Policy Manual, p.40)*

Unfortunately, the most recent projections showed that the balance of IAA combined with current contributions was not sufficient to provide 15 years worth of full indexing. In fact, the adjustment made this year used up 1/10 of the balance of the IAA. The College Pension Board had no alternative but to make changes to how inflation adjustment was to be handled.

The Plan Partners, of which FPSE is one, recommended that contributions to the IAA be increased by 0.25% for both the employers and the employees. This contribution increase is scheduled to take effect on September 1, 2009.

Another problem facing the College Pension Board was the growing cost of the subsidized extended health and dental plans the College Pension Plan currently provides to the retirees. Because of the rapidly growing number of retirees (over a 50 percent increase since 2004) the Board expected that next year the funding available for those benefits would be less than the cost of the benefits. As a result, regardless of any other issues, the Board had to reduce the benefits this year.

Ultimately, the Board decided to stop providing the subsidized extended health and dental plans because of the income tax laws. As of September 1, 2009, when contribution rates increase to help deal with the lack of funding for inflation protection, employee contributions to the plan will exceed 9.0% and that triggers a requirement that employer contributions be at least as high as employee contributions. That requirement means that no employer money could be used to provide the subsidized extended health and dental plans and, as a result, the Board had no choice but to cut the subsidized plans or reject the contribution increase.

Rejecting the contribution increase would have al-

lowed the Board to continue providing some extended health and dental coverage, but only for another year because the Board expects that, because of very poor market returns, there will be another contribution rate increase after the 2009 actuarial valuation is completed.

Ultimately, given all these factors, the Board decided on a three-pronged approach that involved:

1. offering unsubsidized group extended health and dental benefit plans and discontinuing the post retirement group benefit subsidies;
2. establishing and offering a sustainable level of inflation protection based on available funding; and
3. accepting the contribution increase recommended by the Pension Plan Partners.

The Board felt that the three-pronged approach was the best balance between retirees, older active members, and younger active members.

As Chair of the College Pension Board, I have been at the forefront of defending the three-pronged approach. While it may not have made my life easier, and it may not have been best for my career, it was the right decision.

### **Other Standing Committees**

My work on other committees was somewhat easier – and way less stressful. This year I was assigned to work with the Professional & Scholarly Development Committee instead of the Non-Regular Faculty Committee. Other than that, my committee involvement did not change from last year. I continued participating in the Education Policy, Contract Administration Review and Pension Advisory Committees.

The Education Policy and Professional & Scholarly Development Committees were both active this year. While much credit must be given to Staff Rep Jeff McKeil, I spent many hours reviewing drafts and helping with the development of the FPSE white paper on Scholarly Activity.

We also had a very successful conference on governance. I would like to thank Local 15 for suggesting

the conference. Some very good ideas came out of that conference which I hope will be implemented at each of the locals. Clearly, union officers need to work with members of senates/ education councils and boards of governors to ensure that those bodies properly represent the interests of the institutions, and not just their senior administrators.

### **The Policy Table**

As a result of the 2007 round of bargaining, a Provincial Policy Table was established that would, possibly, allow for a form of collegial governance on a system-wide basis. George Davison, Susan Briggs and I are the FPSE reps on that committee. Unfortunately, the government seems to have lost interest in the Policy Table. Our last meeting was in June 2008. At that meeting we established a “collaborations” working group. Our understanding of the idea was that a sub-committee would examine ways that the various post-secondary institutions could work together. So far, it has not produced much in the way of results.

I am still hopeful that the Policy Table can get back on track and do some work on policy that will ensure that students can get the education they need in the communities where they live. The focus of the government on FTE delivery is putting enormous pressure on many of the post-secondary institutions (especially the smaller rural colleges) to cut sections that are not fully enrolled, even where those sections are the only offering of a course – or program. We should be using the policy table as a way to convince the government of the need to recognize the problems facing smaller rural colleges.

### **Joint Administration & Dispute Resolution Committee**

The other joint committee I am on is the Joint Administration & Dispute Resolution Committee. As the only meeting of this committee scheduled for this year is after the deadline for submitting my report there is not much that I can report. Basing my prediction on the increasing tendency of management to want to litigate rather than settle grievances, and observing that one of the agenda items for the JADRC meeting is a matter that we thought was resolved ten years ago (cost of replacement for faculty on leave

for union business) my expectation is that little of value will be resolved.

### **Presentations and Lobbying**

One of our other activities is lobbying. I presented at the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services in October 2008 and, like many others on the executive, raised the issue of funding for post-secondary education. I also took the liberty of raising the insufficiency of legal aid for women in family law disputes and the problems facing people on social assistance. I was quoted in the final report of the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services and they accepted my recommendation to review the earnings exemption for recipients of social assistance.

I also participated in the FPSE lobby of the Minister of Advanced Education where we highlighted the funding problems facing the public post-secondary system.

### **Negotiations**

Of course, this coming year many of us will be turning our focus from broader funding issues to the more specific issue of collective agreement negotiations. In that light, I was asked to chair a committee to do a review of potential bargaining models. I presented the committee's first draft to the March Presidents' Council meeting. I have asked the Presidents to provide feedback so that the committee can have its final draft completed by the Presidents' Retreat in June.

As well, on the negotiations front, I completed a revised version of the chapter of the FPSE Bargaining Manual on the topic of proposal costing. It has been updated to reflect issues that may arise in the 2010 round of bargaining. The new chapter also includes practice questions and answers to those questions.

### **Finance Sub-Committee**

The last assignment I was given was to be a member of the finance sub-committee. The most significant project we had was to examine the budget to look for ways of addressing the fact that FPSE has run over budget for several years in a row. Much of our budgetary problem has arisen from the fact that our legal

expenses have risen dramatically relative to five years ago. In light of last year's AGM resolution to look at the legal costs issue, I recommended that we examine the idea of hiring a staff lawyer. That recommendation was not accepted by the finance committee and, ultimately, the only recommendation accepted by Presidents' Council and coming forward to this AGM is that FPSE dues go up by 0.05%. I support that recommendation, but still believe that we should be looking at alternatives to lower our legal costs such as hiring a staff lawyer.

### **Summary**

It has been a very busy year. We have had our stresses and I hope we can all learn from our past mistakes. As always, it has been a pleasure for me to serve the membership of FPSE. I hope to be able to continue.

Respectfully submitted,

Dominique Roelants,  
Second Vice-President



## MEMBER-AT-LARGE REPORT

### *Terri Van Steinburg*



IT HAS BEEN ANOTHER YEAR OF CHALLENGES for our Federation. We have seen unprecedented economic meltdown, system-wide underfunding, and provincial and federal governments that do not make post-secondary education a priority despite the fact that citizens see it as such.

In my third term as Member-at-Large I have worked within FPSE making contributions to our ongoing work as well as representing the organization externally to our allies and partners.

This year, as a member of the Presidents' Council Finance Sub-Committee, I worked with Cindy Oliver (standing in for Dileep Athaide) and Second VP Dominique Roelants to review the FPSE 2009–2010 Budget. The committee brought forward recommendations to Presidents' Council and those recommendations were adopted by PC. In addition, the Finance Sub-Committee worked on issues related to secondary appointments, benchmarks for investments, and revisions to the travel claim policy.

At the March meeting of Presidents' Council a sub-committee was struck to review the relationship between FPSE and our Pension Trustees. As a member of this sub-committee I will be working with the other members to make recommendations to Presidents' Council on how to improve communications, consultation and collaboration, and on how FPSE Trustee appointments are made.

I continue to participate in the International Solidarity Fund Committee. The committee met May 1, to review the numerous applications and make recom-

mendations regarding the disbursements of the fund.

A great deal of the work our Federation undertakes is done by our Standing Committees. I have been assigned to work with two of these committees as Executive Liaison to the Status of Women Committee and the Human Rights & International Solidarity Committee.

#### **Status of Women Committee**

The representatives on the Status of Women Committee worked hard again this year to advocate on behalf of women's rights. A number of initiatives were undertaken, both at the Federation and local levels, including the "pink slip" campaign designed for the provincial election to raise issues that affect women. A sub-committee of SWC (Candace Fertile, Staff Rep Lesley Burke-O'Flynn and I) worked with FPSE Staff Representative Phillip Legg to mount this campaign. In addition, SWC representatives organized events around December 6th, the National Day of Mourning and Action on Violence Action Women, and March 8th, International Women's Day, and undertook a survey on child care availability at our institutions.

I want to congratulate Candace Fertile from Local 12, Camosun College Faculty Association, who was re-elected as Chair of SWC. Candace has been a great Chair and we are happy she will be continuing.

#### **Human Rights & International Solidarity Committee**

The representatives to the Human Rights & International Solidarity Committee are committed and

passionate advocates and activists on a wide range of human rights issues.

The committee's work this year focused on a number of important issues, including the Israeli military actions against Gaza and the CanWest SLAPP suit against Mordecai Briemberg.

As well, the committee had presentations from Staff Representative Weldon Cowan, on the College Pension Plan and Ethical Investing, and from Barbara Wood, Executive Director of CoDevelopment Canada. Barbara provided an overview of CoDev activities.

Rick Gordon, Local 14, Langara Faculty Association, did not seek another term as HRISC Chair. I want to take this opportunity to thank Rick for his hard work and dedication on HRIS issues and causes. I have very much enjoyed working with Rick and have learned a great deal from him.

Kulwant Gill, Local 7, University of the Fraser Valley Faculty and Staff Association, was elected as the new HRISC Chair for the upcoming year.

### **Canadian Association of University Teachers**

I have been appointed to represent FPSE on the CAUT Women's Committee. I have attended two CAUT Women's Committee meetings in Ottawa in October and March.

The committee has discussed issues related to women and pensions, diversifying CAUT, the definition of 'family' in relation to a CAUT model clause on compassionate care, gender bias in the tenure and promotion process, as well as many other important issues affecting women in our system.

I was also fortunate to be able to attend the CAUT Women's Conference: Mobilizing in an Era of Restructuring, October 16-18, in Ottawa. The conference kicked off with an excellent keynote address from Rosemary Deem, University of Bristol, on the rise of "new managerialism" in post-secondary institutions. There were panel presentations on Working in a Time of Scarcity, The Unsustainable Job, and Building Inclusive Academic Staff Associations.

I had many opportunities for formal and informal discussion with women from post-secondary institutions across Canada. Overall, I was impressed by the quality of presentations, the open dialogue and worthwhile ideas.

To date my participation in the CAUT Women's Committee has been very interesting and has helped to inform my other work within FPSE.

### **BC Federation of Labour**

At the recent BC Federation of Labour Convention I was elected to the position of Trustee. Thanks to Cindy Oliver for encouraging me to put my name forward, to Candice Fertile (Local 12) for nominating me, and to FPSE delegates for their support.

FPSE delegates were active and engaged participants at the Convention, and they made my job as Floor Manager an enjoyable one.

I represent FPSE on the Women's Rights Committee, the Education Committee, and the Political Action Committee. All of these committees reported to the BC Federation of Labour Convention on our activities for the previous year and made recommendations for the year ahead.

### **Conclusion**

I remain impressed by the effectiveness of FPSE in advocating for its members both provincially and nationally. I am proud to be able to represent you in carrying out the important work of our Federation. Thank you for the opportunity to serve and for the support I have received.

FPSE is made up of passionate activists with varied opinions and views but, despite the difficult issues we face, we maintain respectful and professional relationships in representing our members' best interests and that, in my opinion, is the central strength of our organization.

Respectfully submitted,  
Terri Van Steinburg (Local 5),  
Member-at-Large

## MEMBER-AT-LARGE REPORT

### *Bill McConnell*



I WAS RE-ELECTED TO A SECOND TERM AS Member-at-Large at the 2008 post-AGM Presidents' Council (PC) meeting in Whistler. I was assigned as Executive Liaison to two Standing Committees: the Workplace Health, Safety & Environment Committee and the Pension Advisory Committee.

#### **Workplace Health, Safety & Environment Committee**

I attended the two WHSEC meetings held this past year on October 31/November 1, 2008, and February 13, 2009. Details of the discussions, decisions and actions of the WHSEC can be found in Committee Chair Carolynne Fardy's report to the AGM, which I encourage you to read.

I would highlight the committee's active role in creating awareness of occupational health and safety issues, principally by gathering and disseminating a significant amount of practical information to member locals. The hand washing demonstration at the FPSE Spring Conference, for example, was particularly well received by conference attendees. The committee also took an active role in advocating for improvements to health and safety legislation and regulations, such as the push for consumer product hazard labeling.

I would like to thank newly re-elected Chair Carolynne Fardy (Local 2) for her enthusiastic and dedicated leadership of this committee, Staff Representative Zoe Towle for her expertise, guidance and input, and Administrative Assistant Nancy Yip

for her support and assistance to the committee.

#### **Pension Advisory Committee**

I attended the PAC meeting held on September 12/13, 2008, but was unable to attend the meeting held on January 30/31, 2009. Details of the discussions, decisions and actions of the PAC can be found in Committee Chair Al Valteau's report to the AGM, which I also encourage you to read.

I would highlight the committee's continued efforts to address the two key issues facing our pension plan: the longevity of post-retirement group benefits, and threats to the Inflation Adjustment Account (IAA). The committee recommended the presentation "Actuarial Basics of the Pension Plan" made by actuary Richard Border to members of the PAC and PC on September 13, 2008, and an ad hoc committee composed of PAC and PC members prepared a paper on post-retirement group benefits and the IAA in November, 2008.

I would like to thank ongoing Committee Chair Al Valteau (Local 5) for his steady and dedicated leadership of this committee, Staff Representative Weldon Cowan for his guidance, input and expertise in pensions, and Administrative Assistant Margaret Sutherland for her support and assistance to the committee.

#### **Other Activities**

I attended the 3rd National Union of Canadian Association of University Teachers (NUCAUT) Convention in Toronto, May 24-25, 2008, and the

25th Canadian Labour Congress Convention in Toronto, May 26-30, 2008. I was part of the FPSE delegation that met with Minister Coell at the Legislature during October's PC meeting to advocate for a reinstatement of lost funding, and I attended the 52nd BC Federation of Labour Convention in Vancouver, November 24-28, 2008, serving as the FPSE caucus whip. I also attended the Shareholder Association for Research and Education (SHARE) Pension Forum in Vancouver, December 6, 2008, and the FPSE Spring Conference on February 14, 2009.

I will sit on the newly formed PC sub-committee to review the relationship between FPSE and our Pension Trustees and, subject to ratification at the April CAUT Council meeting, will sit on CAUT's Collective Bargaining and Economic Benefits Committee for a three-year term.

## Conclusion

I have enjoyed my second year as Member-at-Large. It has been a pleasure to work closely with Cindy Oliver, Dileep Athaide, George Davison, Dominique Roelants and Terri Van Steinberg, and with the other members of Presidents' Council. I have enjoyed the many opportunities to meet members of our own and other organizations, and I have appreciated the opportunities to increase my awareness of some of the important issues facing our organization. I look forward again to working within our organization as we fight collectively to protect our rights, and strive to protect the vitality of public post-secondary education.

Respectfully submitted,  
Bill McConnell (Local 16),  
Member-at-Large

