



# NEWSLETTER

Jun / Jul / Aug 2014

United Nurses of Alberta



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## Nursing Week - YYC

Nurses from across the Calgary region gathered near the iconic Peace Bridge on May 12, 2014 to celebrate Florence Nightingale's Birthday, which is also the first day of Nursing Week 2014.





By Kevin Champagne  
Local 115 President, United Nurses of Alberta

# Workplace Abuse & Harassment

**I**n the last reporting period, UNA Local 115 has seen a dramatic increase in the incidence of complaints from its membership involving workplace abuse and harassment. It is our professional responsibility to understand the definition of workplace harassment, how to identify it, and the role we can have in mitigating the impact and resolving the issue.

The Government of Alberta states “workplace harassment is offensive, degrading, inappropriate, threatening and may be illegal. It is a form of discrimination prohibited in Alberta in the Alberta Human Rights Act, under the following grounds including race, religious beliefs, ethnicity, gender, physical or mental disability, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status, and sexual orientation.” Following the government’s lead, the employer states workplace harassment is in direct contravention of the AHS value of respect and is not tolerated in the workplace.

Examples of workplace harassment

include, but are not limited to, unwelcome remarks, jokes, innuendo or taunting about a person’s race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, physical or mental disability, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status, or sexual orientation. This may also include refusing to converse or work with an employee based on any of the above noted grounds, intimidation of any kind, condescension or paternalism, unwelcome invitations or requests, display of pornographic, racist or offensive pictures or materials. Classic examples of workplace harassment include, unwelcome remarks about a person’s physical attributes or appearance, unwanted physical contact such as touching, patting, pinching or punching, physical assault, verbal abuse and bullying.

When a member encounters workplace harassment, the member should use the process outlined in the AHS Workplace Violence: Prevention & Response Policy (Formerly Workplace Abuse and Harassment)\* to report. The workplace health and safety reporting

line, (403) 234-7799, is an excellent place to start. To help in your reporting, please remember to document the situation for your records. Keeping a journal that includes, as much detail about the incident will assist the employer in their investigation.

UNA Local 115 members are encouraged to know the AHS Workplace Violence: Prevention & Response Policy\* and take a stand against abuse, violence, and harassment in the workplace. If you encounter any of these in your workplace, get help, take a stand, and talk to us: (403) 670-9960.

Sincerely,

*Kevin Champagne*  
Local 115 President  
kchampagne@una.ab.ca

\*AHS Workplace Violence: Prevention & Response Policy Link  
<https://extranet.ahsnet.ca/teams/policydocuments/1/clp-ahs-pol-workplace-violence-prevention-response.pdf>

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## Local 115 Executive

**President:** Kevin Champagne

**Vice-President:** Kathleen Hamnett

**Secretary:** Ruth Duffy

**Treasurer:** Cameron Westhead

## Local 115 Committees

**CDLC Committee:** Ann Marie Rowland • Cheyenne Fraser  
**Communications:** Cameron Westhead • Heather Dean • Al Perreault

**Grievance Committee:** Local 115 Executive • Jeannine Arbour

**OH & S Committee:** Kathleen Hamnett • Ruth Duffy

**PRC Committee:** Kevin Champagne • Jennifer Blain • Laura Muenchrath •

Leona Wright • Ruth Duffy • Tim Aeyelts • Wayne Stopa

**Portfolio Reps:** Jennie Pomerleau • Wanda Deadman • Wayne Stopa •

Katherine Kugler • Sandra McGonigal

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## Editors

Cameron Westhead  
Al Perreault

# Heather Smith Congratulates UNA Members For Fight Against Pension

*But UNA President Reminds Members The Battle Against Bill 9 Is Not Over*

By United Nurses of Alberta - May 16, 2014

**MEMBERS** of United Nurses of Alberta and other public sector unions deserve enormous credit for the lobbying effort that resulted in the decision by all parties in the Alberta Legislature yesterday to refer destructive changes to members' pensions to an all-party committee, says President Heather Smith.

"This development is a true victory for our members in the Local Authorities Pension Plan and thousands of other Alberta public sector unions, but we need to remember that it is not a final victory and we will need to redouble our efforts to ensure that this bad law is not back in the future," Smith said.

She noted that the change could not have happened without the strong support of all Opposition parties in the Legislature, and without the efforts of all unions involved in the Labour Coalition on Pensions led by the Alberta Federation of Labour.

"We are fortunate that the immediate threat to our pensions has been put aside, but we are mindful that at least for now the government says it has not changed its position on pensions," she reminded members. "So we will need to continue to remind the MLAs that represent us of the reasons why this is a bad and unneeded policy."

Premier Dave Hancock and the three Opposition parties agreed last night to send Bills 9 and 10, which would have a significant harmful impact on Alberta pensions in both the public and private sectors, to the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future for public hearings. The committee will report back to the fall sitting of the Legislature.

This provides an opportunity to fix the many problems with the bills or to see them die on the order paper and not be passed into law.

If passed, Bill 9, the Public Sector Pension Plans Amendment Act, 2014, would have allowed the Progressive Conservative government to gut the pensions of front-line public sector workers, including UNA members. The impact would have been most severe for younger workers entering the workforce, and would have particularly severely impacted professions and occupations like nursing care that are dominated by women.

Bill 10, the Employment Pension (Private Sector) Plans Amendment Act, 2014, would have allowed private companies to arbitrarily introduce changes to private sector plans similar to those envisioned for public employees in Bill 9.



Members of UNA holding a rally convince their local PC MLA to negotiate, not legislate, the government's proposed changes to the Local Authorities Pension Plan (LAPP). Finance Minister Doug Horner announced the Government would delay passage of Bill 9, a law that would impose drastic changes on the LAPP, until fall 2014.

# United Nurses of Alberta

## Local 115 Delegate Nomination Form Annual General Meeting

I wish to let my name stand as a voting delegate for the United Nurses of Alberta General Annual Meeting on November 18, 19 & 20, 2014

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (Please Print Clearly)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Personal Email Address (Please Print Clearly)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Home Telephone Number &/or Cell Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Site/Unit

\_\_\_\_\_  
UNA ID number

Abutting Shift(s): Abutting Shifts must be pre approved by UNA Provincial Treasurer. Please indicate date (s) & shift time (Nov. 17, 2014 evening shift &/or Nov 20, 2014 night shift)

\_\_\_\_\_  
November 17/2014

\_\_\_\_\_  
November 20/2014

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Nominee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of 1<sup>st</sup> Member in good Standing:

Name: (Please Print) \_\_\_\_\_ UNA ID # \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of 2nd Member in good Standing:

Name: (Please Print) \_\_\_\_\_ UNA ID # \_\_\_\_\_

Members will be elected at the Local 115 meeting on September 10/2014.  
Nomination form deadline to Local 115: September 3/14 @ 1630 hrs. Local fax # (403) 270 5749. The local will send confirmation email upon receipt of form.



# Nurses: A Force For Change

By United Nurses of Alberta - May 16, 2014



**THIS** year Nursing Week started on Florence Nightingale's actual birthday, May 12th, and continues until May 18th. I think it is appropriate that the international theme this year is "Nurses: A Force for Change – a vital resource for health."

As Nursing Week comes to an end I want to express my appreciation. First and foremost, I thank you for your contribution to the health and well-being of Albertans, whether that is in a facility or in the community. Each day of the year you make a difference, just by doing what our profession is respected for doing – caring.

I also want to thank all members who participated in our annual survey. The feedback you provided is invaluable to our Provincial Negotiating Committee and assists UNA in our efforts to address workplace issues. I also thank all members who rose to the challenge of the attack on our defined-benefit pension plan, the Local Authorities Pension Plan (LAPP). Thanks to you, the legislative changes proposed by the Provincial Government have been delayed. Although this in itself is a great victory, we must not be fooled. While Bill 9 has been "paused" the attack on public sector pension plans is not over.

Very soon we will begin a mediation process, with the hope of achieving a new provincial collective agreement. Please follow what is happening in negotiations and with our pension by checking our website, following us on Facebook or Twitter, or most importantly by communicating with your Local Executive.

Thank you and in solidarity,

*Heather Smith*

President, United Nurses of Alberta



Nurses from across the Calgary region gathered near the iconic Peace Bridge on May 12, 2014 to celebrate Florence Nightingale's Birthday, which is also the first day of Nursing Week 2014.



# Hassan Yussuff Is New CLC President

By BY H.G. WATSON - May 8, 2014  
Rabble.ca



**TODAY**, Hassan Yussuff has made history as the first person to defeat a sitting president of the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC). Yussuff is also the first person of colour to hold the office of leader of the CLC.

Yussuff defeated outgoing President Ken Georgetti by just 40 votes. Georgetti had been president for 15 years. Yussuff joined the CLC in 2002 as the Secretary-Treasurer.

Shortly after the results were made public, Georgetti passed a motion to have the vote counted as a unanimous one in favour of Yussuff, greeting the president-elect and raising their hands in solidarity at the podium.

The new President ran on a campaign of change, promising to bring grass roots action back to the CLC. A third presidential nominee, Hassan Husseini, dropped out of the race earlier in the week in order to

back Yussuff's bid for presidency.

Chants of solidarity were heard throughout the convention hall in Montreal as Yussuff's supporters rushed to embrace the new president.

In his first speech after the election, Yussuff re-affirmed his commitment to working towards a more inclusive and mobilized labour movement. He also sent a clear message to Prime Minister Stephen Harper – that the CLC will not bridge any more attacks on labour law in Canada.

NDP leader Thomas Mulcair spoke at the convention before the winner was announced. He said that the CLC and NDP would continue to work closely to advance a progressive agenda in Canada.

“We have, for the first time, a government that is actively attacking organized labour,” he said after his speech, referencing recent federal bills like Bill C-377. “They’ve been trying to put all sorts of sticks in the spokes of the union movement. It’s a direct attack on rights that are guaranteed under the Charter.”

Liberal leader Justin Trudeau also offered his congratulations to Yussuff over Twitter after the election.

Minister of Employment, Jason Kenney, also tweeted his congratulations to the new President, and thanks to Ken Georgetti for his service.

In other CLC election news, Barbara Byers defeated Nathalie Stringer to be named the secretary-treasurer of the CLC. There were just over 2,000 votes cast for both candidates, indicating that over half of the delegates who attended the morning presidential vote had left.

Byers reaffirmed her support for Yussuff and promised to fight for every single member of the CLC. Similar to Georgetti, Stringer successfully motioned to have the vote recorded as unanimous in Byers favour.

Marie Clarke Walker was re-elected to her position of executive vice-president. Donald Lafleur is the new face on the national executive board. He had the most votes of any of the executive vice-president candidates, with 1,265 votes in his favour.

We will post further updates about the CLC elections as they develop.

# UNA Submission Included In Saskatchewan Labour Federation's Appeal Of Province's Labour Law

By United Nurses of Alberta - May 14, 2014

**THE** Supreme Court of Canada will hear arguments this week on whether changes to Saskatchewan's labour laws are constitutional, a case in which United Nurses of Alberta has been granted intervener status.



The Saskatchewan Federation of Labour asked the Supreme Court to rule on the provincial legislation that restricts who may legally strike as well as on changes designed to make union certification difficult. The federation argues the changes infringe on the freedom of association and freedom of expression.

UNA will argue more broadly in its written submission that the freedom of association guaranteed by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms protects workers' liberty to collectively withdraw their labour and that taking away the liberty of two or more workers have acted together to withdraw their labour is a breach of their fundamental right to association and thus violates the Charter.

UNA's submission argues that the

issue before the court should not be whether freedom of association includes the right to strike as a feature of collective bargaining, but whether the Charter freedom includes a freedom to collectively withdraw labour for any reason independent of modern labour legislation.

SFL President Larry Hubich said last year that the federation is also asking for a declaration that the 2008 changes to the Saskatchewan Trade Union Act "substantially interfere with workers' right to form unions of their own choosing, for the purpose of bargaining collectively with their employers."

The right-wing Saskatchewan Party introduced the legislation in December 2007 after winning its first provincial election. So-called "essential services" provisions in the legislation state that employers and unions should agree on which workers are essential before a strike takes place. If an agreement can't be reached, however, the law allows employers to dictate whichever employees it pleases, and as many as it please, as essential.

In practice, this effectively renders all strikes ineffective.

UNA, working with the Alberta Federation of Labour, sought intervener status because of the impact

the Saskatchewan law could have on law in other parts of Canada and because of parallels with recent labour legislation in Alberta that is also subject to court appeals.

Court challenges began in Saskatchewan after the law was passed in May 2008. A Regina Court of Queen's Bench judge ruled in February 2012 that the law was unconstitutional.

The judge said that "no other essential services legislation in Canada comes close to prohibiting the right to strike as broadly, and as significantly" and gave the provincial government a year to fix the law.

Instead, the government went to the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal and argued that the lower court's decision broke new ground when it stated there is Charter protection for the right to strike.

The Appeal Court agreed with the province and ruled the right to strike does not have Charter protection.

The federation, on behalf of several provincial unions, is now seeking the Supreme Court's opinion on a related matter, whether the lower court was right to say the legislation did not violate the Charter.



# UNITED NURSES OF ALBERTA - LOCAL 115

## Notice of Monthly Meeting:

June 11, 2014

4pm to 6pm

FMC Auditorium



- ★ CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR 6 MONTH INTERIM SECRETARY POSITION. Nomination forms can be found on our website under the “Resources” tab. Nominations due June 4 by 16:00. Contact the Local office for more info.
- ★ There will not be any Local meetings in July or August. The Local Executive will be in the office and available to assist you or answer questions throughout the summer.
- ★ Following the June Local meeting, the next meeting will be held on Sept. 10 from 4-6pm in the FMC Auditorium.
- ★ Annual General Meeting nomination forms are out now. Please visit the Local 115 website to download additional

(403) 670-9960

local115exec@una.ab.ca

www.local115.wordpress.com



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@UNALocal115