

February 2013

# APBU Staff Newsletter

Your Source for Association News

## A Word from the President — Dr. Arshad Taseen



This year the APBU had to deal with many important but challenging issues that are, thankfully, not common every year. This includes pension issues, collective agreements, staff classification and government imposed budget cuts, in addition to the regular day-to-day realities of dealing with the Administration.

As you know the Faculty/Librarian Collective agreement along with the Memorandum of Agreement on pension has been ratified and needs to be signed as soon as the administration is ready. The pension plan administrator, ADN, has several questions for clarifications. The ratified memorandum of agreement presents much contradiction in the pension plan text and also poses some legal issues in its interpretation. They are being verified

by the lawyers on our side as well as on the Administration's side.

The Contract Faculty collective agreement is still being voted on and hopefully will be ratified very soon.

The Staff negotiations have begun in earnest, and you will be updated on it as soon as the negotiating team is ready to consult the membership.

The staff classification process was long and difficult, and in order to ensure equity, APBU is trying to facilitate the appeal procedure to benefit the members as much as possible. It is not possible to go back on what had been agreed with the administration, but if anyone has suggestions going forward I strongly encourage you to bring them to the APBU's attention through your VP.

The funding reduction to the universi-

ties by the Quebec government has been expressed as a "crisis" by our administration. The funding cuts are not good news for any university but we do not know for sure if these cuts are temporary in nature or how serious they are. We are looking at how best to respond to these cuts. We are open to suggestions from the membership at large. Please do not hesitate to provide your views at [apbuoffice@UBishops.ca](mailto:apbuoffice@UBishops.ca)

Your continued support and participation in the APBU is vital to maintain a healthy environment on campus for all of us. Please continue to take an active role to make your voice heard

### Inside this issue:

President's Report	1
Staff VP Update	1
Executive Member List	2
New Faces on Campus	3
Negotiations Update	3

## Staff VP Update — Merrylou Smith

Since assuming office there have been a number of changes and challenges to address and oversee at BU and in the APBU. I've had the pleasure of serving on the APBU Executive with two faculty presidents and a seemingly ever-changing cast of fellow executive members. Change has also been a constant at Joint Committee as Jim Sweeny and I have attended many sessions with various representatives from the administration. First of all with Caroline Raymond and Guy Bertrand, for a while Claire Pelletier joined us and then Helene St-Amand replaced Guy, and Valerie Pouliot replaced Caroline. Then the new Director of Human Resources Nick Andrews joined Helene and now Isabelle Goyette will be replacing Helene and serving with Nick on the committee.

Through all of these committee changes we have come to many satisfactory resolutions concerning various staff issues. A few have required acceptance with reluctance on our part, but only temporarily until such time as a more beneficial reso-

lution may be negotiated. Hiring practices, schedules, health and safety issues, university policies, benefits, position elimination, position creation, and position evolution issues, pension, classification, finance and negotiation issues have kept us very busy at Joint Committee and at the Executive Committee. We have also spent a lot of time working on the mandates for the job classification revision and maintenance committees, and resolving various challenges presented by pay equity and the new classification structure on the Pay Scale Committee.

Among my many duties I have been addressing vacancies on the APBU Executive and overseeing the roles of APBU staff representatives on university committees. Another ongoing aspect of my work has been to hear staff concerns and issues in one-on-one meetings with staff members and at Stewards' Council meetings, and communicating these to the APBU Executive members for discussion and the

development of resolutions. Our protests against management actions that violate the collective agreement and that are arbitrary or unfair to staff members are not always effectively resolved. However, the thoughts and concerns expressed by staff are always communicated to the administration and the Executive of the APBU. There have been many challenges and changes to address and oversee in these past two years at BU, and there are many more just ahead. It is up to you, the staff members of the APBU, to bring your suggestions, concerns and ideas to my attention and that of your other union representatives. We will do our best to see that equity, fairness, justice and support are available for every staff member of the APBU.

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THE JANUARY 2013 SENIORITY LIST HAS BEEN POSTED ON MYBU. PLEASE VERIFY YOUR INFORMATION.  
STAFF MEMBERS HAVE 30 DAYS FROM POSTING TO REPORT ANY DISCREPANCIES.

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## Classification Appeals Update

There has been some concern expressed by staff members about some staff having included letters of support from their managers and supervisors in their job classification revision appeals. As a result a discussion took place at Joint Committee regarding managerial input into the revision appeals. The mandate of the Joint Revision Evaluation Committee is to review and verify the information provided, and allows for the committee to request input from the managers and supervisors where it was not included with the submissions.

### Be an Active Member

The strength of the APBU is its members. You can play a really important part in the union by being an active member. Here are five things you can do:

1. attend union meetings and have your say
2. encourage your colleagues to join and support the APBU
3. report to your Steward about problems in your sector
4. run for office on the Executive
5. ask what else you can do to help

### Help make a difference!

### Steward's Council Members

Todd Aiken	Cheryl Porter
James Bradley	Marguerite Ramage
Simon Fortin	Troy Rothney
Jeff MacDonald	Marilyn Turner

### APBU Executive Member List

#### President: Arshad Taseen

Treasurer: Mark Gandy

Secretary: Heather McKeen-Edwards

Communications Officer: Anthony Di Mascio

#### Faculty VP: Layachi Bentabet

Faculty Grievance Officer: Catherine Tracy

Faculty Membership Officer: Christopher Stonebanks

#### Librarian: Gary McCormick

#### Contract Faculty VP: Daron Westman

Contract Faculty Grievance Officer: Lisa Schmidt

Contract Faculty Membership Officer: Angie Petitcher

#### Staff VP: Merrylou Smith

Staff Grievance Officer: James Sweeny

Staff Membership Officer: Justina Browne

#### Past President: Jean Manore

The APBU is a member of the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT), and it promotes the welfare and professional interests of the association and its members. It negotiates, obtains, and preserves employment conditions such as salary, financial security, working conditions, and all matters of employer-employee relations for members of the bargaining units.

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## New Faces on Campus—Welcome!

Samantha Adams—Recruitment & Admissions

Debbie Batley Everett—Library

Yohann Bernier—Custodian

Suzanne Brown—Custodian

Catherine Claus—Residence and Conference Services

Martine Couture—Residence and Conference Services

Sarah Haddon—Alumni Relations

Brenna Haydock—Residence and Conference Services

Stacey Johnston—Residence and Conference Services

William Klinck—Counseling Services

Elizabeth Mazurek—Alumni and Advancement

Stephanie Nadeau—Curator

Regine Newman—Fine Arts

Martin Rourke—Sports Information & Recreation

**We're on the Web!**

**<http://apbu.ca/>**

## Negotiations Update

*Negotiations have finally begun! The Staff team of Simon Fortin, Chris Fowles, Larry Everett and Jim Sweeny met once a week throughout the fall to prepare the APBU staff unit's collective agreement demands. These were based on the issues survey which the vast majority of you completed. One issue which was not as obvious at the time of the survey but has been raised both at the staff meeting and by e-mail and conversations with us and the APBU Executive is the question of job security. We can assure you it is one of the areas where we are pushing for stronger protection in the Collective Agreement.*

*We advised the administration in mid-December that we were ready to begin and suggested meeting the first week back after*

*the Christmas break. Unfortunately they were not ready and it was not until January 18<sup>th</sup> that we were able to meet them to discuss the negotiation protocol. Their team is made up of Nick Andrews, Helen St-Amand and Ruth Sheeran, who has come back from retirement to serve as their chief negotiator. They were unable to begin to meet with us until Feb. 4<sup>th</sup>.*

*We have exchanged proposed changes to the Collective Agreement and are meeting with them on Monday and Tuesday each week to negotiate. The administration is asking for a one year Collective Agreement with more management flexibility over hours, staffing and contracting out.*

*The current Collective Agreement has 48*

*articles, 8 are not being opened by either side and for some others there are only small "housekeeping" changes. We have agreed on 7 of those articles to date and now we are moving to articles where we hope to have improvements.*

*It is still early in the process; we have only met a total of 5 times. We will be calling a staff meeting to report on the status of the negotiations next month. By then we should have a better idea of the administration position on your demands.*

*Working for you,  
The Staff Negotiation Team*